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The Shakespeare Head Edition
of the Novels and selected Writings
of Daniel Defoe
MOLL FLANDERS VOL. I



THE FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES OF THE FAMOUS MOLL FLANDERS, &c

Who was Born in Newgate, and during a Life of
continu'd Variety for Three-score Years, besides her Child-
hood, was Twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife
(whereof once to her own Brother) Twelve Year
a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon
in Virginia, at last grew Rich,
liv'd Honest, and died
a Penitent

Written from her own Memorandums

Volume I

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A R E F O R S A L E

THE FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES OF THE FAMOUS MOLL FLANDERS, *with its flaring title to attract the criminal classes for whom it was intended, was published on January 27th, 1722, and bore the imprint: LONDON: Printed for and sold by W. C H E T W O O D, at Cato's Head, in Russell Street, Covent Garden; and T. E D L I N, at the Prince's Arms, over against Exeter Change, in the Strand, 1721.* A second and a third edition appeared in the same year; and an abridged edition for the pocket, generally known as the fourth edition, was published by J. Read in July, 1723; whilst in November of the same year, there was a reissue of the third edition.

The present text is a reprint of the third Edition. A few obvious printer's errors, both in spelling and punctuation, have been corrected, otherwise no attempt has been made to modernize either the one or the other.

THE PREFACE

THE World is so taken up of late with Novels and Romances, that it will be hard for a private History to be taken for Genuine, where the Names and other Circumstances of the Person are concealed; and on this Account we must be content to leave the Reader to pass his own Opinion upon the ensuing Sheets, and take it just as he pleases.

The Author is here supposed to be writing her own History, and in the very beginning of her Account she gives the Reasons why she thinks fit to conceal her true Name, after which there is no Occasion to say any more about that.

It is true that the original of this Story is put into new Words, and the stile of the famous Lady we here speak of, is a little alter'd, particularly she is made to tell her own tale in modester Words than she told it at first; the Copy which came first to Hand, having been written in Language more like one still in Newgate, than one grown Penitent and Humble, as she afterwards pretends to be.

The pen employ'd in finishing her Story, and making it what you now see it to be, has had no little Difficulty to put it into a Dress fit to be seen, and to make it speak Language fit to be read: When a Woman debauched from her Youth, nay, even being the Offspring of Debauchery and Vice, comes to give an Account of all her vicious Practices, and even to descend to the particular Occasions and Circumstances, by which she first became wicked, and of all the progressions of Crime, which she run through in Threescore Years, an Author must be hard put to it to wrap it up so clean, as not to give room, especially for vicious Readers, to turn it to his Disadvantage.

All possible Care however has been taken to give no lewd Ideas, no immodest turns in the new dressing up this Story, No, not to the worst part of her Expressions; to this Purpose some of the vicious part of her Life, which could not be mo-

destly told, is quite left out, and several other Parts are very much shortened; what is left 'tis hoped will not offend the chasteſt Reader, or the modesteſt Hearer; and as the best use is to be made even of the worst Story, the Moral 'tis hoped will keep the Reader ſerious, even where the Story might incline him to be otherwife: To give the History of a wicked Life re-pented of, neceſſarily requires that the wicked part ſhould be made as wicked as the real History of it will bear; to illustrate and give a Beauty to the Penitent part, which is certainly the best and brighteſt, if related with equal Spirit and Life.

It is ſuggested there cannot be the ſame Life, the ſame Brightneſs and Beauty in relating the penitent Part, as is in the criminal Part: If there is any Truth in that Suggestion, I muſt be allow'd to ſay, 'tis because there is not the ſame taste and reliſh in the Reading; and indeed it is too true that the diſference lies not in the real worth of the Subject ſo muſh as in the Guft and Palate of the Reader.

But as this Work is chiefly recommended to thoſe who know how to read it, and how to make the good Uſes of it, which the Story all along recommends to them; ſo it is to be hop'd that ſuch Readers will be muſh more pleas'd with the Moral, than the Fable, with the Application than with the Relation, and with the end of the Writer than with the Life of the Person written of.

There is in this Story abundance of delightful Incidents, and all of them uſeſfully apply'd. There is an agreeable turn Artfully given them in the relating, that naturally Inſtructs the Reader, either one way, or another. The firſt part of her lew'd Life with the young gentleman at Colcheſter, has ſo many happy turns given it to expose the Crime, and warn all whose Circumstances are adapted to it, of the ruinous End of ſuch things, and the foolish, Thoughtleſs, and abhor'd Con-duct of both the parties, that it abundantly attones for all the lively Description ſhe gives of her Folly and Wickedneſſ.

The Repentance of her Lover at the Bath, and how brought

by the just alarm of his Fit of Sickness to abandon her; the just Caution given there against even the lawful Intimacies of the dearest Friends, and how unable they are to preserve the most solemn Resolutions of Virtue without divine Assistance; these are Parts, which to a just Discernment will appear to have more real Beauty in them, than all the amorous Chain of Story, which introduces it.

In a Word, as the whole Relation is carefully garbled of all the Levity and Looseness that was in it: So it is applied, and with the utmost care to virtuous and religious Uses. None can without being guilty of manifest Injustice, cast any Reproach upon it, or upon our Design in publishing it.

The Advocates for the Stage, have in all Ages made this the great Argument to perswade People that their Plays are useful, and that they ought to be allow'd in the most civiliz'd, and in the most religious Government; namely, that they are apply'd to virtuous Purposes, and that by the most lively Representations, they fail not to recommend Virtue, and generous Principles, and to discourage and expose all sorts of Vice and Corruption of Manners; and were it true that they did so, and that they constantly adhered to that Rule, as the Test of their acting on the Theatre, much might be said in their Favour.

Throughout the infinite variety of this Book, this Fundamental is most strictly adhered to; there is not a wicked Action in any part of it, but is first or last rendered Unhappy and Unfortunate; There is not a superlative Villain brought upon the Stage, but either he is brought to an unhappy End, or brought to be a Penitent: There is not an ill thing mention'd but it is condemn'd, even in the Relation, nor a virtuous just thing, but it carries its Praise along with it: What can more exactly answer the Rule laid down, to recommend, even those Representations of things which have so many other just Objections lying against them? Namely, of Example of bad Company, obscene Language, and the like.

Upon this Foundation this Book is recommended to the Reader, as a Work from every part of which something may be learned, and some just and religious Inference is drawn by which the Reader will have something of Instruction, if he pleases to make use of it.

All the Exploits of this Lady of Fame, in her Depredations upon Mankind stand as so many warnings to honest People to beware of 'em, intimating to 'em by what Methods innocent People are drawn in, plundered, and rob'd, and by Consequence how to avoid them. Her robing a little Child, dress'd fine by the Vanity of the "Mother, to go to the Dancing School, is a good Memento to such People hereafter; as is likewise her picking the Gold-Watch from the young Ladies side in the Park.

Her getting a parcel from a hairbrain'd Wench at the Coaches in St. John's-Street; her Booty^{at the Fire}, and also at Harwich; all give us excellent Warning in such Cases to be more present to ourselves in sudden Surprises of every Sort.

Her application to a sober Life, and industrious management at last in Virginia, with her Transported Spouse, is a Story fruitful of Instruction, to all the unfortunate Creatures who are oblig'd to seek their Re-establishment abroad; whether by the Misery of Transportation, or other Disaster; letting them know that Diligence and Application have their due encouragement, even in the remotest part of the World, and that no Case can be so low, so despicable, or so empty of Prospect, but that an unwearied Industry will go a great way to deliver us from it, will in time raise the meanest Creature to appear again in the World, and give him a new Cast for his Life.

These are a few of the serious Inferences which we are led by the Hand to in this Book, and these are fully sufficient to Justify any Man in recommending it to the World, and much more to Justify the Publication of it.

There are two of the most beautiful Parts still behind,

which this Story gives some Idea of, and lets us into the Parts of them, but they are either of them too long to be brought into the same Volume; and indeed are, as I may call them, whole Volumes of themselves, viz., 1. *The Life of her Governess*, as she calls her, who had run thro', it seems in a few Years all the eminent degrees of a Gentlewoman, a Whore, and a Bawd; a Midwife, and a Midwife keeper, as they are call'd; a Pawnbroker, a Child-taker, a Receiver of Thieves, and of stolen Goods; and in a Word, herself a Thief, a breeder up of Thieves, and the like, and yet at last a Penitent.

The second is the *Life of her Transported Husband*, a Highway-man; who it seems liv'd a twelve Years' Life of successful Villany upon the Road, and even at last came off so well as to be a Voluntier Transport, not a Convict; and in whose *Life* there is an incredible Variety.

But as I said, these are things too long to bring in here, so neither can I make a Promise of their coming out by themselves.

We cannot say indeed, that this History is carried on quite to the End of the *Life of this famous Moll Flanders*, for no Body can write their own *Life* to the full End of it, unless they can write it after they are dead: but her Husband's *Life* being written by a third Hand, gives a full Account of them both, how long they lived together in that Country, and how they came both to England again, after about eight Years, in which time they were grown very Rich, and where she liv'd it seems, to be very old; but was not so extraordinary a Penitent, as she was at first; it seems only that indeed she always spoke with abhorrence of her former *Life*, and of every Part of it.

In her last Scene at Maryland and Virginia, many pleasant things happen'd, which makes that part of her *Life* very agreeable, but they are not told with the same Elegancy as those accounted for by herself; so it is still to the more Advantage that we break off here.

THE FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES OF THE FAMOUS MOLL FLANDERS

MY True Name is so well known in the Records, or Registers at *Newgate*, and in the *Old Bailey*, and there are some things of such Consequence still depending there, relating to my particular Conduct, that it is not to be expected I should set my Name, or the Account of my Family to this Work; perhaps, after my Death it may be better known, at present it would not be proper, no, not tho' a general Pardon should be issued, even without Exceptions of Persons or Crimes.

It is enough to tell you, that as some of my worst Comrades, who are out of the Way of doing me Harm, having gone out of the World by the Steps, and the String; as I often expected to go, knew me by the Name of *Moll Flanders*; so you may give me leave to go under that Name till I dare own who I have been, as well as who I am.

I have been told, that in one of our Neighbour Nations, whether it be in *France*, or where else, I know not, they have an Order from the King, that when any Criminal is condemn'd, either to Dye, or to the Gallies, or to be Transported, if they leave any Children, as such are generally unprovided for, by the Forfeiture of their Parents, so

they are immediately taken into the Care of the Government, and put into an Hospital call'd the House of *Orphans*, where they are Bred up, Cloath'd, Fed, Taught, and when fit to go out, are placed to Trades, or to Services, so as to be well able to provide for themselves by an honest industrious Behaviour.

Had this been the Custom in our Country, I had not been left a poor desolate Girl without Friends, without Cloaths, without Help or Helper, as was my Fate; and by which, I was not only expos'd to very great Distresses, even before I was capable, either of understanding my Case, or how to amend it, but brought into a Course of Life, scandalous in itself, and which in its ordinary Course, tended to the swift Destruction both of Soul and Body.

But the Case was otherwise here, my Mother was convicted of Felony for a petty Theft, scarce worth naming, *viz.* borrowing three Pieces of fine *Holland*, of a certain Draper in *Cheap-side*: The Circumstances are too long to repeat, and I have heard them related so many Ways, that I can scarce tell which is the right Account.

However it was, they all agree in this, that my Mother pleaded her Belly, and being found quick with Child, she was respited for about Seven Months; after which she was call'd down, *as they term it*, to her former Judgment, but obtain'd the Favour afterward of being Transported to the Plantations, and left me about Half a Year old; and in bad Hands you may be sure.

This is too near the first Hours of my Life, for me to relate anything of my self, but by hearsay; 'tis enough to mention, that as I was born in such an unhappy Place, I had no Parish to have recourse to for my Nourishment in my Infancy, nor can I give the least Account how I was

kept alive; other, than that, as I have been told, some Relation of my Mother took me away, but at whose Expence, or by whose Direction I know nothing at all of it.

The first Account that I can Recollect, or could ever learn of my self, was that I had wander'd among a Crew of those People they call *Gypsies*, or *Egyptians*; but I believe it was but a little while that I had been among them, for I had not had my Skin discoloured, as they do to all Children they carry about with them, nor can I tell how I came among them, or how I got from them.

It was at *Colchester* in *Essex*, that those People left me; and I have a Notion in my Head, that I left them there, (that is, that I hid my self and would not go any farther with them) but I am not able to be particular in that Account; only this I remember, that being taken up by some of the Parish Officers of *Colchester*, I gave an Account, that I came into the Town with the *Gypsies*, but that I would not go any farther with them, and that so they had left me, but whither they were gone that I knew not, for tho' they sent round the Country to enquire after them, it seems, they could not be found.

I was now in a Way to be provided for; for tho' I was not a Parish Charge upon this, or that Part of the Town by Law; yet as my Case came to be known, and that I was too young to do any Work, being not above three Years old, Compassion mov'd the Magistrates of the Town to take Care of me, and I became one of their own as much as if I had been born in the Place.

In the Provision they made for me, it was my good hap to be put to Nurse, as they call it, to a Woman who was indeed Poor, but had been in better Circumstances, and who got a little Livelihood by taking such as I was suppos'd to be; and keeping them with all Necessaries, till

*The FORTUNES & MISFORTUNES of
they were at a certain Age, in which it might be suppos'd
they might go to Service, or get their own Bread.*

This Woman had also a little School, which she kept to teach Children to Read and to Work; and having, I say, liv'd before that in good Fashion, she bred up the Children with a great deal of Art, as well as with a great deal of Care.

But which was worth all the rest, she bred them up very Religiously also, being herself a very sober, pious Woman. (2.) Very Housewifely and Clean, and, (3.) Very Mannerly, and with good Behaviour: So that excepting a plain Diet, coarse Lodging, and mean Cloaths, we were brought up as Mannerly as if we had been at the Dancing School.

I was continu'd here till I was eight Years Old, when I was terrified with News, that the Magistrates (as I think they call'd them) had ordered that I should go to Service; I was able to do but very little wherever I was to go, except it was to run of Errands, and be a Drudge to some Cook-Maid, and this they told me of often, which put me into a great Fright; for I had a thorough Aversion to going to Service, as they call'd it, tho' I was so young; and I told my Nurse, that I believ'd I could get my Living without going to Service if she pleased to let me; for she had Taught me to Work with my Needle, and Spin Worsted, which is the chief Trade of that City, and I told her that if she would keep me, I would Work for her, and I would Work very hard.

I talk'd to her almost every Day of Working hard; and in short I did nothing but Work and Cry all Day, which grieved the good kind Woman so much, that at last she began to be concern'd for me, for she lov'd me very well.

One Day after this, as she came into the Room, where

all the poor Children were at Work, she sat down just over against me, not in her usual Place as Mistress, but as if she had set herself on purpose to observe me, and see me Work; I was doing something she had set me to, as I remember it was Marking some Shirts, which she had taken to Make, and after a while she began to Talk to me: Thou foolish Child, says she, thou art always Crying, (for I was Crying then) Prithee, What do'st Cry for? because they will take me away, *says I*, and put me to Service, and I can't work House-Work; well, Child, says she, but tho' you can't work House-Work you will learn it in time, and they won't put you to hard Things at first; yes they will, *says I*, and if I can't do it, they will Beat me, and the Maids will Beat me to make me do great Work, and I am but a little Girl, and I can't do it, and then I cry'd again, till I could not speak any more.

This mov'd my good Motherly Nurse, so that she resolv'd I should not go to Service yet, so she bid me not Cry, and she would speak to Mr. *Mayor*, and I should not go to Service till I was bigger.

Well, this did not satisfy me, for to think of going to Service at all was such a frightful Thing to me, that if she had assured me I should not have gone till I was 20 Years Old, it would have been the same to me, I should have cry'd all the time, with the very Apprehension of its being to be so at last.

When she saw that I was not pacified yet, she began to be angry with me, and what would you have *says she*, don't I tell you that you shall not go to Service till you are bigger? Ay, *says I*, but then I must go at last. Why, what, *said she*, is the Girl Mad? what would you be a Gentlewoman? Yes, *says I*, and cry'd heartily till I roar'd out again.

This set the old Gentlewoman a Laughing at me, as you may be sure it would: Well, Madam, Forsooth, says she, *Gibing at me*, you would be a Gentlewoman, and how will you come to be a Gentlewoman? What will you do it by your Fingers Ends?

Yes, *says I again*, very innocently.

Why, what can you Earn, *says she*, what can you get a Day at your Work?

Three Pence, *said I*, when I Spin, and Four Pence when I Work plain Work.

Alas! Poor Gentlewoman, *said she again*, Laughing, what will that do for thee?

It will keep me, *says I*, if you will let me live with you; and this *I said* in such a poor Petitioning Tone, that it made the poor Woman's Heart yearn to me, as she told me afterwards.

But, *says she*, that will not keep you and buy you Cloaths too; and who must buy the little Gentlewoman Cloaths, *says she*, and smil'd all the while at me.

I will Work harder then, *says I*, and you shall have it all.

Poor Child! It won't keep you, *said she*, it will hardly find you in Victuals.

Then I would have no Victuals, *says I again*, very Innocently, let me but live with you.

Why, Can you live without Victuals? *says she*; yes, *again says I*, very much like a Child, you may be sure, and still I cry'd heartily.

I had no Policy in all this, you may easily see it was all Nature, but it was joined with so much Innocence, and so much Passion, That in short, it set the good Motherly Creature a weeping too, and at last she cry'd as fast as I did, and then took me, and lead me out of the Teaching

Room; Come, *says she*, you shan't go to Service, you shall live with me, and this pacify'd me for the present.

After this, she going to wait on the *Mayor*, my Story came up, and my good Nurse told Mr. *Mayor* the whole Tale: He was so pleased with it, that he would call his Lady, and his Two Daughters to hear it, and it made Mirth enough among them, you may be sure.

However, not a Week had passed over, but on a sudden comes Mrs. *Mayoress*, and her Two Daughters to the House to see my old Nurse, and to see her School and the Children: When they had looked about them a little: Well Mrs. _____, *says the Mayoress* to my Nurse; and pray which is the little Lass that is to be a Gentlewoman? I heard her, and I was terrible frighted, tho' I did not know why neither; but Mrs. *Mayoress* comes up to me, Well Miss, *says she*, And what are you at Work upon? The Word Miss was a Language that had hardly been heard of in our School, and I wonder'd what sad Name it was she call'd me; However, I stood up, made a Court'sy, and she took my Work out of my Hand, look'd on it, and said it was very well; then she look'd upon one of my Hands, nay, she may come to be a Gentlewoman, *says she*, for ought I know; she has a Lady's Hand, I assure you: This pleased me mightily; but Mrs. *Mayoress* did not stop there, but put her Hand in her Pocket, gave me a Shilling, and bid me mind my Work, and learn to Work well, and I might be a Gentlewoman for ought she knew.

All this while, my good old Nurse, Mrs. *Mayoress*, and all the rest of them, did not understand me at all, for they meant one Sort of thing by the Word Gentlewoman, and I meant quite another: for alas, all I understood by being a Gentlewoman, was to be able to Work for myself, and get enough to keep me without *going to Service*, whereas

Well, after Mrs. *Mayoress* was gone, her two Daughters came in, and they call'd for the Gentlewoman too, and they talk'd a long while to me, and I answered them in my Innocent way; but always if they ask'd me whether I resolved to be a Gentlewoman, I answer'd, Yes: At last they ask'd me, what a Gentlewoman was? That puzzel'd me much; however, I explain'd my self negatively, that it was one that did not go to Service, to do House-Work; they were mightily pleased, and lik'd my little Prattle to them, which it seems was agreeable enough to them, and they gave me Money too.

As for my Money, I gave it all to my Mistress Nurse, as I call'd her, and told her, she should have all I got when I was a Gentlewoman, as well as now; by this and some other of my talk, my old Tuteress began to understand what I meant by being a Gentlewoman; and that it was no more, than to be able to get my Bread by my own Work, and at last, she ask'd me whether it was not so.

I told her, Yes, and insisted on it, that to do so, was to be a Gentlewoman; for, says I, there is such a one, naming a Woman that mended Lace, and wash'd the Ladies Lac'd-heads; she, says I, is a Gentlewoman, and they call her Madam.

Poor Child, says my good old Nurse, you may soon be such a Gentlewoman as that, for she is a Person of ill Fame, and has had two Bastards.

I did not understand anything of that; but I answered, I am sure they call her Madam, and she does not go to Service nor do House-Work, and therefore I insisted, that she was a Gentlewoman, and I would be such a Gentlewoman as that.

The Ladies were told all this again, and they made themselves Merry with it, and every now and then Mr. Mayor's Daughters would come and see me, and ask where the little Gentlewoman was, which made me not a little Proud of my self besides. I was often visited by these young Ladies, and sometimes they brought others with them; so that I was known by it, almost all over the Town.

I was now about Ten Years old, and began to look a little Womanish, for I was mighty Grave, very Mannerly, and as I had often heard the Ladies say I was Pretty, and would be very Handsome, you may be sure it made me not a little Proud: However, that Pride had no ill Effect upon me yet, only as they often gave me Money, and I gave it my old Nurse, she, *honest Woman*, was so just as to lay it out again for me, and gave me Head-Dresses, and Linnen, and Gloves, and I went very Neat, for if I had Rags on, I would always be Clean, or else I would dabble them in Water my self; but *I say*, my good Nurse, when I had Money given me, very honestly laid it out for me, and would always tell the Ladies this, or that, was bought with their Money; and this made them give me more, till at last, I was indeed call'd upon by the Magistrates to go out to Service; but then I was become so good a Work-woman my self, and the Ladies were so kind to me, that I was past it; for I could Earn as much for my Nurse as was enough to keep me; so she told them, that if they would give her leave, she would keep the Gentlewoman, as she call'd me, to be her Assistant, and teach the Children, which I was very well able to do; for I was very nimble at my Work, tho' I was yet very young.

But the Kindness of the Ladies did not end here, for when they understood that I was no more maintain'd by the Town as before, they gave me Money oftener; and as

I grew up, they brought me Work to do for them; such as Linnen to Make, Laces to Mend, and Heads to Dress up, and not only paid me for doing them, but even taught me how to do them; so that I was a Gentlewoman indeed, as I understood that Word; for before I was Twelve Years old, I not only found myself Cloaths, and paid my Nurse for my keeping, but got Money in my Pocket too.

The Ladies also gave me Cloaths frequently of their own or their Childrens; some Stockings, some Petticoats, some Gowns, some one thing, some another, and these my old Woman managed for me like a Mother, and kept them for me, obliged me to mend them, and turn them to the best Advantage, for she was a rare House-Wife.

At last one of the Ladies took such a Fancy to me, that she would have me Home to her House, for a Month, she said, to be among her Daughters.

Now tho' this was exceeding kind in her, yet as my good Woman said to her, unless she resolv'd to keep me for good and all, she would do the little Gentlewoman more harm than good: Well, says the Lady, that's true, I'll only take her Home for a Week then, that I may see how my Daughters and she agree, and how I like her Temper, and then I'll tell you more; and in the mean time, if any Body comes to see her as they used to do, you may only tell them, you have sent her out to my House.

This was prudently managed enough, and I went to the Lady's House, but I was so pleased there with the young Ladies, and they so pleased with me, that I had enough to do to come away, and they were as unwilling to part with me.

However, I did come away, and liv'd almost a Year more with my honest old Woman, and began now to be very helpful to her; for I was almost fourteen Years old,

was tall of my Age, and look'd a little Womanish; but I had such a taste of Genteel living at the Lady's House, that I was not so easy in my old Quarters as I us'd to be, and I thought it was fine to be a Gentlewoman indeed, for I had quite other Notions of a Gentlewoman now, than I had before; and as I thought that it was fine to be a Gentlewoman, so I lov'd to be among Gentlewomen, and therefore I long'd to be there again.

When I was about fourteen Years and a quarter Old, my good old Nurse, Mother I ought to call her, fell Sick and Dy'd; I was then in a sad Condition indeed, for as there is no great Bustle in putting an End to a poor Body's Family, when once they are carried to the Grave; so the poor good Woman being Buried, the Parish Children were immediately remov'd by the Church-Wardens; the School was at an End, and the Day-Children of it had no more to do but just stay at Home, till they were sent somewhere else; as for what she left, a Daughter, a married Woman, came and swept it all away, and removing the Goods, they had no more to say to me than to Jest with me, and tell me, that the little Gentlewoman might set up for herself, if she pleased.

I was frighted out of my Wits almost, and knew not what to do; for I was, *as it were*, turn'd out of Doors to the wide World, and that which was still worse, the old honest Woman had two and Twenty Shillings of mine in her Hand, which was all the Estate the little Gentlewoman had in the World; and when I ask'd the Daughter for it, she huft me, and told me, she had nothing to do with it.

It was true the good poor Woman had told her Daughter of it, and that it lay in such a Place, that it was the Child's Money, and had call'd once or twice for me to

give it me, but I was unhappily out of the way, and when I came back she was past being in a Condition to speak of it: However, the Daughter was so Honest afterwards, as to give it me, tho' at first she us'd me Cruelly about it.

' Now was I a poor Gentlewoman indeed, and I was just that very Night to be turn'd into the wide World; for the Daughter remov'd all the Goods, and I had not so much as a Lodging to go to, or a bit of Bread to Eat: But it seems some of the Neighbours took so much Compassion of me, as to acquaint the Lady in whose Family I had been; and immediately she sent her Maid to fetch me; and away I went with them Bag and Baggage, and with a glad Heart you may be sure: The fright of my Condition had made such an Impression upon me, that I did not want now to be a Gentlewoman, but was very willing to be a Servant, and that any kind of Servant they thought fit to have me be.

But my new generous Mistress had better Thoughts for me. I call her generous, for she exceeded the good Woman I was with before in every Thing, as in Estate; I say, in every Thing except Honesty; and for that, tho' this was a Lady most exactly Just, yet I must not forget to say on all Occasions, that the first, tho' Poor, was as uprightly Honest as it was possible.

I was no sooner carried away as I have said by this good Gentlewoman, but the first Lady, *that is to say*, the *Mayoress* that was, sent her Daughters to take care of me; and another Family which had taken Notice of me when I was the little Gentlewoman, sent for me after her, so that I was mightily made of; nay, and they were not a little Angry, especially the *Mayoress*, that her Friend had taken me away from her; for as she said, I was hers by Right, she having been the first that took any Notice of me; but

they that had me, would not part with me; and as for me I could not be better than where I was.

Here I continued till I was between 17 and 18 Years old, and here I had all the Advantages for my Education, that could be imagined; the Lady had Masters home to teach her Daughters to Dance, and to speak *French*, and to Write, and others to teach them Musick; and as I was always with them, I learn'd as fast as they; and tho' the Masters were not appointed to teach me, yet I learn'd by Imitation and Enquiry, all that they learn'd by Instruction and Direction. So that in short, I learned to Dance and speak *French* as well as any of them, and to Sing much better, for I had a better Voice than any of them; I could not so readily come at playing the Harpsicord or Spinet, because I had no Instrument of my own to Practise on, and could only come at theirs in the Intervals when they left it; but yet I learned tollerably well, and the young Ladies at length got two Instruments, that is to say, a Harpsicord and a Spinet too, and then they Taught me themselves; but as to Dancing they could hardly help my learning Country Dances, because they always wanted me to make up even Number; and on the other Hand, they were as heartily willing to learn me everything that they had been Taught themselves, as I could be to take the Learning.

By this Means I had, as I have said, all the Advantages of Education that I could have had, if I had been as much a Gentlewoman as they were, with whom I liv'd; and in some things I had the Advantage of my Ladies, tho' they were my Superiors, *Viz.* that mine were all the Gifts of Nature, and which all their Fortunes could not furnish. First, I was apparently Handsomer than any of them. Secondly, I was better shap'd, and Thirdly, I Sung better,

by which I mean, I had a better Voice; in all which you will, I hope, allow me to say, I do not speak my own Conceit, but the Opinion of all that knew the Family.

I had with all these the common Vanity of my Sex, *Viz.* that being really taken for very Handsome, or if you please for a great Beauty, I very well knew it, and had as good an Opinion of my self, as any Body else could have of me, and particularly I loved to hear any Body speak of it, which happened often, and was a great Satisfaction to me.

Thus far I have had a smooth Story to tell of my self, and in all this Part of my Life, I not only had the Reputation of living in a very good Family, and a Family Noted and Respected every where for Vertue and Sobriety, and for every valuable Thing; but I had the Character too of a very sober, modest, and virtuous young Woman, and such I had always been; neither had I yet any Occasion to think of any thing else, or to know what a Temptation to Wickedness meant.

But that which I was too vain of, was my Ruin, or rather my Vanity was the Cause of it. The Lady in the House where I was, had two Sons, young Gentlemen of Extraordinary Parts and Behaviour; and it was my Misfortune to be very well with them both, but they managed themselves with me in a quite different Manner.

The eldest a gay Gentleman, that knew the Town, as well as the Country, and tho' he had Levity enough to do an ill-natured thing, yet had too much Judgment of things to pay too dear for his Pleasures; he began with that unhappy Snare to all Women, *Viz.* taking Notice upon all Occasions how pretty I was, as he call'd it, how agreeable, how well Carriaged, and the like; and this he contriv'd so subtilly, as if he had known as well how to catch a Wo-

man in his Net, as a Partridge when he went a Setting; for he would contrive to be talking this to his Sisters, when tho' I was not by, yet when he knew I was not so far off, but that I should be sure to hear him: His Sisters would return softly to him, hush Brother, she will hear your, she is but in the next Room; then he would put it off, and talk softlier as if he had not known it, and begin to acknowledge he was Wrong; and then as if he had forgot himself, he would speak aloud again, and I that was so well pleased to hear it, was sure to Listen for it upon all Occasions.

After he had thus baited his Hook, and found easily enough the Method how to lay it in my Way, he play'd an open Game; and one Day going by his Sister's Chamber when I was there, he comes in with an Air of Gaiety, O! Mrs. *Betty*, said he to me, How do you do Mrs. *Betty*? don't your Cheeks burn Mrs. *Betty*? I made a Court'sy, and blush'd, but said nothing; What makes you talk so, Brother? *says the Lady*; Why, *says he*, we have been talking of her below Stairs this half Hour; *Well, says his Sister*, you can say no Harm of her, that I am sure, so 'tis no matter what you have been talking about; nay, *says he*, 'tis so far from talking Harm of her, that we have been talking a great deal of good, and a great many fine Things have been said of Mrs. *Betty*, I assure you; and particularly, that she is the Handsomest young Woman in *Colchester*, and, in short, they begin to Toast her Health in the Town.

I wonder at you Brother, *says the Sister*, *Betty* wants but one Thing, but she had as good want every Thing, for the Market is against our Sex just now; and if a young Woman has Beauty, Birth, Breeding, Wit, Sense, Manners, Modesty, and all to an Extream; yet if she has not Money,

she's no Body, she had as good want them all; nothing but Money now recommends a Woman; the Men play the Game all into their own Hands.

Her younger Brother, who was by, cry'd, *Hold Sister, you run too fast, I am an Exception to your Rule: I assure you, if I find a Woman so accomplish'd as you Talk of, I won't trouble my self about the Money.* O, *says the Sister,* but you will take Care not to Fancy one then without the Money.

You don't know that neither, *says the Brother.*

But why Sister, (*says the Elder Brother*) why do you exclaim so about the Fortune? you are none of them that want a Fortune, what ever else you want.

I understand you, Brother, (*replies the Lady very smartly*) you suppose I have the Money and want the Beauty; but as Times go now, the first will do, so I have the better of my Neighbours.

Well, *says the younger Brother*, but your Neighbours may be even with you; for Beauty will steal a Husband sometimes in spight of Money; and when the Maid chances to be Handsomer than the Mistress, she often-times makes as good a Market, and rides in a Coach before her.

I thought it was time for me to withdraw, and I did so; but not so far, but that I heard all their Discourse, in which I heard abundance of fine things said of my self, which prompted my Vanity, but, *as I soon found*, was not the way to encrease my Interest in the Family, for the Sister and the younger Brother fell grievously out about it; and as he said some very disobliging things to her, upon my Account, so I could easily see that she resented them, by her future Conduct to me, which indeed was very unjust; for I had never had the least thought of what

she suspected, as to her younger Brother: Indeed the elder Brother in his distant remote Way had said a great many things as in Jest, which I had the Folly to believe were in Earnest, or to flatter my self with the Hopes of what I ought to have suppos'd he never intended.

It happened one Day that he came running up Stairs, towards the Room where his Sister us'd to sit and work, as he often us'd to do; and calling to them before he came in, as was his way too, I being there alone, step'd to the Door, and said, Sir, the Ladies are not here, they are walk'd down the Garden: as I step'd forward to say this, he was just got to the Door, and clasping me in his Arms, as if it had been by Chance, O! Mrs. *Betty*, says he, are you here? that's better still, I want to speak with you, more than I do with them, and then having me in his Arms he kiss'd me three or four times.

I struggled to get away, and yet did it but faintly neither, and he held me fast, and still kiss'd me, till he was out of Breath, and, sitting down, says he, *dear Betty*, I am in Love with you.

His Words, I must confess, fir'd my Blood; all my Spirits flew about my Heart, and put me into Disorder enough: He repeated it afterwards several times, that he was in Love with me, and my Heart spoke as plain as a Voice, that I lik'd it; nay, whenever he said, I am in Love with you, my Blushes plainly reply'd *wou'd you were*, Sir. However nothing else pass'd at that time; it was but a Surprise, and I soon recover'd my self. He had stay'd longer with me, but he happen'd to look out at the Window and see his Sisters coming up the Garden, so he took his Leave, kiss'd me again, told me he was very serious, and I should hear more of him very quickly, and away he went infinitely pleas'd, and had there not been one Misfortune in it, I

From this time my Head run upon Strange Things, and I may truly say, I was not my self, to have such a Gentleman talk to me of being in Love with me, and of my being such a charming Creature, as he told me I was, these were things I knew not how to bear, my Vanity was elevated to the last Degree: It is true, I had my Head full of Pride, but knowing nothing of the Wickedness of the times, I had not one Thought of my Virtue about me; and had my young Master offer'd it at first Sight, he might have taken any Liberty he thought fit with me; but he did not see his Advantage, which was my Happiness for that time.

It was not long, but he found an Opportunity to catch me again, and almost in the same Posture, indeed it had more of Design in it on his Part, tho' not on my Part; *it was thus*, The young Ladies were gone a Visiting with their Mother; his Brother was out of Town, and as for his Father he had been at *London* for a Week before; he had so well watch'd me, that he knew where I was, tho' I did not so much as know that he was in the House, and he briskly comes up the Stairs, and seeing me at Work, comes into the Room to me directly, and began just as he did before, with taking me in his Arms, and kissing me for almost a quarter of an Hour together.

It was his younger Sister's Chamber that I was in, and as there was no Body in the House but the Maid below Stairs, he was it may be the ruder: In short, he began to be in Earnest with me indeed; perhaps he found me a little too easy, for I made no Resistance to him while he only held me in his Arms and kiss'd me; indeed I was too well pleased with it, to resist him much.

Well tir'd with that kind of Work, we sat down, and there he talk'd with me a great while; *he said*, he was charm'd with me, and that he could not rest till he had told me how he was in Love with me, and if I could Love him again, and would make him happy, I should be the saving of his Life; and many such fine Things. I said little to him again, but easily discovered that I was a Fool, and that I did not in the least perceive what he meant.

Then he walked about the Room, and taking me by the Hand, I walk'd with him; and by and by taking his Advantage, he threw me down upon the Bed, and kissed me there most Violently; but to give him his Due, offered no manner of Rudeness to me, only kiss'd me a great while; after this he thought he had heard some Body come up Stairs, so he got off from the Bed, lifted me up, professing a great deal of Love for me, but told me it was all an honest Affection, and that he meant no ill to me, and with that put five Guineas into my Hand, and went down Stairs.

I was more confounded with the Money than I was before with the Love; and began to be so elevated, that I scarce knew the Ground I stood on: I am the more particular in this, that if it comes to be read by any innocent young Body, they may learn from it to guard themselves against the Mischiefs which attend an early Knowledge of their own Beauty; if a young Woman once thinks herself Handsome, she never doubts the Truth of any Man that tells her he is in Love with her; for if she believes herself Charming enough to captivate him, 'tis natural to expect the Effects of it.

This Gentleman had now fir'd his Inclination, as much as he had my Vanity, and as if he had found that he had an Opportunity, and was sorry he did not take hold of it, he

comes up again in about half an Hour, and falls to work with me again just as he did before, only with a little less Introduction.

And First, when he entered the Room, he turn'd about, and shut the Door. Mrs. Betty, said he, *I fancy'd before, some Body was coming up Stairs, but it was not so; However, adds he, if they find me in the Room with you, they shan't catch me a kissing of you.* I told him I did not know who should be coming up Stairs, for I believed there was no Body in the House, but the Cook, and the other Maid, and they never came up those Stairs; *well, my Dear, says he, 'Tis good to be sure however,* and so he sits down and we began to talk; and now, tho' I was still on fire with his first Visit, and said little, he did as it were put Words in my Mouth, telling me how passionately he lov'd me, and that tho' he could not till he came to his Estate, yet he was resolv'd to make me happy then, and himself too; *that is to say, to marry me,* and abundance of such things, which I poor Fool did not understand the drift of, but acted as if there was no kind of Love, but that which tended to Matrimony; and if he had spoken of that, I had no Room, as well as no Power, to have said No; but we were not come to that length yet.

We had not sat long, but he got up, and stopping my very Breath with Kisses, threw me upon the Bed again; but then he went further with me than Decency permits me to mention, nor had it been in my Power to have deny'd him at that Moment, had he offered much more than he did.

However, tho' he took these Freedoms with me, it did not go to that, which they call the last Favour, which, to do him Justice, he did not attempt; and he made that Self-denial of his a Plea for all his Freedoms with me up

on other Occasions after this: When this was over, he stay'd but a little while, but he put almost a Handful of Gold in my Hand, and left me a thousand Protestations of his Passion for me, and of his loving me above all the Women in the World.

It will not be strange, if I now began to think; but alas! it was but with very little solid Reflections: I had a most unbounded Stock of Vanity and Pride, and but a very little Stock of Virtue: I did indeed cast sometimes with my self what my young Master aim'd at, but thought of nothing but the fine Words and the Gold; whether he intended to marry me, or not, seem'd a Matter of no great Consequence to me; nor did I so much as think of making any Capitulation for my self, 'till he made a kind of formal Proposal to me, as you shall hear presently.

Thus I gave up my self to Ruin without the least Concern, and am a fair *Memento* to all young Women, whose Vanity prevails over their Virtue: Nothing was ever so stupid on both Sides, had I acted as became me, and resisted as Virtue and Honour requir'd, he had either desisted his Attacks, finding no room to expect the end of his Design, or had made fair and honourable Proposals of Marriage; in which Case, whoever blam'd him, no Body could have blam'd me. In short, if he had known me, and how easy the Trifle he aim'd at, was to be had, he would have troubled his Head no farther, but have given me four or five Guineas, and have lain with me the next time he had come at me: On the other Hand, if I had known his Thoughts, and how hard he supposed I would be to be gain'd, I might have made my own Terms, and if I had not capitulated for an immediate Marriage, I might for a Maintainance till Marriage, and might have had what I would; for he was Rich to Excess, besides

what he had in Expectation; but I had wholly abandoned all such Thoughts, and was taken up only with the Pride of my Beauty, and of being belov'd by such a Gentleman: as for the Gold, I spent whole Hours in looking upon it; I told the Guineas over a Thousand times a Day: Never poor vain Creature was so wrapt up with every Part of the Story, as I was not considering what was before me, and how near my Ruin was at the Door; and indeed I think, I rather wished for that Ruin, than studied to avoid it.

In the mean time, however, I was cunning enough, not to give the least room to any in the Family to imagine that I had the least Correspondence with him; I scarce ever look'd towards him in publick, or answer'd if he spoke to me; when, but for all that, we had every now and then a little Encounter, where we had room for a Word or two, and now and then a Kiss, but no fair Opportunity for the Mischief intended; and especially considering that he made more Circumlocution, than he had occasion for, and the Work appearing Difficult to him, he really made it so.

But as the Devil is an unwearied Tempter, so he never fails to find an Opportunity for the Wickedness he invites to: It was one Evening that I was in the Garden, with his two younger Sisters, and himself, when he found Means to convey a Note into my Hand, by which he told me that he would to Morrow desire me publickly to go of an Errand for him, and that I should see him somewhere by the Way.

Accordingly after Dinner, he very gravely says to me, his Sisters being all by, *Mrs. Betty, I must ask a Favour of you: What's that? says the Second Sister; nay Sister, says he, very gravely, If you can't spare Mrs. Betty to Day, any other*

time will do; Yes, *they said*, they could spare her well enough, and the Sister beg'd Pardon for asking; Well, but *says the eldest Sister*, you must tell Mrs. *Betty* what it is; if it be any private Business that we must not hear, you may call her out, there she is: *Why Sister*, says the Gentleman very gravely, *What do you mean? I only desire her to go into the High-street* (and then he pulls out a Turn-over), *to such a Shop*; and then he tells them a long Story of two fine Neckcloths he had bid Money for, and he wanted to have me go and make an Errand to buy a Neck to that Turn-over that he showed, and if they would not take my Money for the Neckcloths to bid a Shilling more, and haggle with them; and then he made more Errands, and so continued to have such petty Business to do, that I should be sure to stay a good while.

When he had given me my Errands, he told them a long Story of a Visit he was going to make to a Family they all knew, and where was to be such and such Gentlemen, and very formally ask'd his Sisters to go with him, and they as formally excus'd themselves, because of Company that they had Notice was to come and Visit them that Afternoon, all which by the way he had contriv'd on purpose.

He had scarce done speaking, but his Man came up to tell him that Sir *W—— H——*'s Coach stop'd at the Door; so he runs down, and comes up again immediately, *Alas!* says he aloud, *There's all my Mirth spoil'd at once; Sir W—— has sent his Coach for me, and desires to speak with me.* It seems this Sir *W——* was a Gentleman who liv'd about three Miles off, to whom he had spoke on purpose to lend him his Charriot for a Particular Occasion, and had appointed it to call for him, as it did, about three a Clock.

Immediately he calls for his best Wig, Hat, and Sword, and ordering his Man to go to the other Place to make his Excuse, that was to say, he made an Excuse to send his Man away, he prepares to go into the Coach: As he was going, he stop'd a while, and speaks mightily earnestly to me about his Business, and finds an Opportunity to say very softly, *Come away my dear as soon as ever you can.* I said nothing, but made a Court'sy, as if I had done so to what he said in Publick; in about a Quarter of an Hour I went out too; I had no Dress, other than before, except that I had a Hood, a Mask, a Fan, and a pair of Gloves in my Pocket; so that there was not the least Suspicion in the House: He waited for me in a back Lane, which he knew I must pass by, and the Coachman knew whither to go, which was to a certain Place, called *Mile-End*, where liv'd a Confident of his, where we went in, and where was all the Convenience in the World to be as wicked as we pleas'd.

When we were together, he began to Talk very gravely to me, and to tell me, he did not bring me there to betray me; that his Passion for me, would not suffer him to abuse me; that he resolved to marry me as soon as he came to his Estate; that in the mean time, if I would grant his Request, he would maintain me very Honourably, and made me a thousand Protestations of his Sincerity, and of his Affection to me; and that he would never abandon me, and, *as I may say*, made a thousand more Preambles than he need to have done.

However, as he press'd me to speak, I told him I had no Reason to question the Sincerity of his Love to me, after so many Protestations, But —— and there I stop'd, as if I left him to guess the rest; But what, my Dear, *says be*, I guess what you mean, what if you should be with

Child, is not that it? Why then, *says he*, I'll take care of you, and provide for you, and the Child too, and that you may see I am not in Jest, *says he*, here's an Earnest for you, and with that he pulls out a Silk Purse with an Hundred Guineas in it, and gave it me; and I'll give you such another, *says he*, every Year till I marry you.

My Colour came and went at the Sight of the Purse, and with the fire of his Proposal together, so that I could not say a Word, and he easily perceiv'd it; so putting the Purse into my Bosom, I made no more Resistance to him, but let him do just what he pleas'd, and as often as he pleas'd; and thus I finish'd my own Destruction at once, for from this Day, being forsaken of my Virtue, and my Modesty, I had nothing of Value left to recommend me, either to God's Blessing, or Man's Assistance.

But things did not end here, I went back to the Town, did the Business he directed me to, and was at Home before any Body thought me long; as for my Gentleman, he stay'd out till late at Night, and there was not the least Suspicion in the Family, either on his Account or on mine.

We had after this, frequent Opportunities to repeat our Crime, and especially at Home when his Mother and the young Ladies went abroad a Visiting, which he watch'd so narrowly, as never to miss; knowing always before-hand when they went out, and then fail'd not to catch me all alone, and securely enough; so that we took our fill of our wicked Pleasures for near half a Year; and yet, which was the most to my Satisfaction, I was not with Child.

But before this half Year was expir'd, his younger Brother, of whom I have made some mention in the beginning of the Story, falls to work with me; and he finding

me alone in the Garden one Evening, begins a Story of the same Kind to me, made good honest Professions of being in Love with me; and in short, proposes Fairly and Honourably to marry me.

I was now confounded, and driven to such an Extremity, as the like was never known to me; I resisted the Proposal with Obstinacy, and began to arm my self with Arguments: I laid before him the Inequality of the Match, the Treatment I should meet with in the Family, the Ingenuity it would be to his good Father and Mother, who had taken me into their House upon such generous Principles, and when I was in such a low Condition; and in short, I said everything to dissuade him that I could imagine except telling him the Truth, which wou'd indeed have put an End to it all, but that I durst not think of mentioning.

But here happened a Circumstance that I did not expect indeed, which put me to my Shifts; for this young Gentleman, as he was plain and honest, so he pretended to nothing but what was so too; and knowing his own Innocence, he was not so careful to make his having a Kindness for Mrs. *Betty* a Secret in the House, as his Brother was; and tho' he did not let them know that he had talk'd to me about it, yet he said enough to let his Sisters perceive he lov'd me, and his Mother saw it too, which tho' they took no Notice of to me, yet they did to him, and immediately I found their Carriage to me alter'd more than ever before.

I saw the Cloud, though I did not foresee the Storm; it was easy, *I say*, to see their Carriage was alter'd, and that it grew worse and worse every Day, 'till at last I got Information that I should in a very little while be desired to remove.

I was not alarm'd at the News, having a full Satisfaction that I should be provided for; and especially considering that I had Reason every Day to expect I should be with Child, and that then I should be obliged to remove without any Pretences for it.

After some time, the younger Gentleman took an Opportunity to tell me, that the Kindness he had for me had got Vent in the Family; he did not charge me with it, *he said*, for he knew well enough which way it came out; he told me his way of Talking had been the Occasion of it, for that he did not make his Respect for me so much a Secret as he might have done, and the Reason was, that he was at a Point, that if I would consent to have him, he would tell them all openly that he lov'd me, and that he intended to marry me: That it was true, his Father and Mother might resent it, and be unkind, but he was now in a Way to live, being bred to the Law, and he did not fear Maintaining me, and that in short, as he believ'd I would not be ashamed of him, so he was resolv'd not to be ashamed of me, and that he scorn'd to be afraid to own me now, who he resolv'd to own after I was his Wife, and therefore I had nothing to do but to give him my Hand, and he would answer for all the rest.

I was now in a dreadful Condition indeed, and now I repented heartily my Easiness with the eldest Brother, not from any Reflection of Conscience, for I was a stranger to those things, but I could not think of being a Whore to one Brother, and a Wife to the other; it came also into my Thoughts, that the first Brother had promis'd to make me his Wife when he came to his Estate; but I presently remember'd, what I had often thought of, that he had never spoken a Word of having me for a Wife, after he had Conquer'd me for a Mistress; and indeed till now,

tho' I said I thought of it often, yet it gave no Disturbance at all, for as he did not seem in the least to lessen his Affection to me, so neither did he lessen his Bounty, tho' he had the Discretion himself to desire me not to lay out a Penny in Cloaths, or to make the least show extraordinary, because it would necessarily give Jealousy in the Family, since every Body knew I could come at such things no manner of ordinary Way, but by some private Friendship, which they would presently have suspected.

I was now in a great strait, and knew not what to do; the main Difficulty was this, the younger Brother not only laid close Siege to me, but suffered it to be seen; he would come into his Sister's Room, and his Mother's Room, and sit down, and talk a Thousand kind Things to me, even before their Faces; so that the whole House talk'd of it, and his Mother reprov'd him for it, and their Carriage to me appeared quite altered: In short, his Mother had let fall some Speeches, as if she intended to put me out of the Family, that is in *English*, to turn me out of Doors. Now, I was sure this could not be a Secret to his Brother, only that he might think, as indeed no Body else yet did, that the youngest Brother had made any Proposal to me about it; but as I easily could see that it would go farther, so I saw likewise there was an absolute Necessity to speak of it to him, or that he would speak of it to me, but knew not whether I should break it to him, or let it alone till he should break it to me.

Upon serious Consideration, for indeed now I began to consider things very seriously, and never till now, I resolv'd to tell him of it first, and it was not long before I had an Opportunity, for the very next Day his Brother went to *London* upon some Business, and the Family being out a Visiting, just as it happened before, and as in-

deed was often the Case, he came according to his Custom to spend an Hour or Two with Mrs. *Betty*.

When he had sate down a while, he easily perceived there was an Alteration in my Countenance, that I was not so free and pleasant with him as I used to be, and particularly, that I had been a Crying; he was not long before he took Notice of it, and ask'd me in very kind Terms what was the Matter, and if anything troubled me: I would have put it off if I could, but it was not to be conceal'd; so after suffering many Importunities to draw that out of me, which I long'd as much as possible to disclose, I told him that it was true, something did trouble me, and something of such a Nature, that I could hardly conceal from him, and yet that I could not tell how to tell him of it neither; that it was a thing that not only surpriz'd me, but greatly perplext me, and that I knew not what Course to take, unless he would direct me: He told me with great Tenderness, that let it be what it would, I should not let it trouble me, for he would protect me from all the World.

I then began at a Distance, and told him I was afraid the Ladies had got some secret Information of our Correspondence; for that it was easy to see that their Conduct was very much chang'd towards me, and that now it was come to pass, that they frequently found Fault with me, and sometimes fell quite out with me, tho' I never gave them the least Occasion: That whereas, I us'd always to lye with the Eldest Sister, I was lately put to lye by my self, or with one of the Maids; and that I had over-heard them several times talking very unkindly about me; but that which confirm'd it all was, that one of the Servants had told me that she had heard I was to be turn'd out, and that it was not safe for the Family that I should be any longer in the House.

He smil'd when he heard of this, and I ask'd him how he could make so light of it, when he must need know, that if there was any Discovery, I was undone, and that it would hurt him, tho' not Ruin him, as it would me: I upbraided him, that he was like the rest of his Sex, that when they had the Character of a Woman at their Mercy, often-times made it their Jest, and at least look'd upon it as a Trifle, and counted the Ruin of those they had had their Will of, as a thing of no Value.

He saw me warm and serious, and he chang'd his Stile immediately; *be told me*, he was sorry I should have such a thought of him: that he had never given me the least Occasion for it, but had been as tender of my Reputation, as he could be of his own; that he was sure our Correspondence had been managed with so much Address, that not one Creature in the Family had so much as a Suspicion of it; that if he smil'd when I told him my Thoughts, it was at the Assurance he lately receiv'd, that our understanding one another, was not so much as guess'd at, and that when he had told me, how much Reason he had to be Easy, I should smile as he did, for he was very certain, it would give me a full Satisfaction.

This is a Mistery I cannot understand, *says I*, or how it should be to my Satisfaction, that I am to be turn'd out of Doors; for if our Correspondence is not discover'd, I know not what else I have done to change the Faces of the whole Family to me, who formerly used me with so much Tenderness, as if I had been one of their own Children.

Why look you, Cbild, says he; That they are uneasy about you, that is true, but that they have the least Suspicion of the Case as it is, and as it respects you and I, is so far from being true, that they suspect my Brother Robin, and, in short, they are fully perswaded he makes Love to you: Nay, the Fool has

put it into their Heads too himself; for he is continually Bantring them about it, and making a Jest of himself; I confess I think he is wrong to do so, because he cannot but see it vexes them, and makes them unkind to you; but 't is a Satisfaction to me, because of the Assurance it gives me, that they do not suspect me in the least, and I hope this will be to your Satisfaction too.

So it is, *says I*, one way, but this does not reach my Case at all, nor is this the chief Thing that troubles me, tho' I have been concern'd about that too: What is it then, *says he*? With which, I fell into Tears, and could say nothing to him at all: He strove to pacifie me all he could, but began at last to be very pressing upon me, to tell what it was; at last *I answer'd*, that I thought I ought to tell him too, and that he had some right to know it, besides, that I wanted his Direction in the Case, for I was in such Perplexity, that I knew not what Course to take, and then I related the whole Affair to him: *I told him*, how imprudently his Brother had manag'd himself, in making himself so Publick; for that if he had kept it a Secret, I could but have denied him Positively, without giving any Reason for it, and he would in Time have ceased his Sollicitations; but that he had the Vanity, first, to depend upon it that I would not deny him, and then had taken the Freedom to tell his Design to the whole House.

I told him, how far I had resisted him, and how sincere and honourable his Offers were; but *says I*, my Case will be doubly hard; for as they carry it ill to me now, because he desires to have me, they'll carry it worse when they shall find I have deny'd him; and they will presently say, there's something else in it, and that I am marry'd already to somebody else, or that I would never refuse a Match so much above me as this was.

This Discourse surpriz'd him indeed very much: He *told me*, that it was a critical Point indeed for me to manage, and he did not see which way I should get out of it; but he would consider of it, and let me know next time we met, what Resolution he was come to about it; and in the mean time, desir'd I would not give my Consent to his Brother, nor yet give him a flat Denial, but that I would hold him in Suspence a while.

I seem'd to start at his saying, I should not give him my Consent; *I told him*, he knew very well, I had no Consent to give; that he had ingag'd himself to marry me, and that I was thereby ingag'd to him; that he had all along told me, I was his Wife, and I look'd upon my self as effectually so, as if the Ceremony had pass'd; and that it was from his own Mouth that I did so, he having all along persuaded me to call my self his Wife.

Well, my Dear, *says he*, don't be concern'd at that now; if I am not your Husband, I'll be as good as a Husband to you, and do not let those things trouble you now, but let me look a little farther into this Affair, and I shall be able to say more next time we meet.

He pacify'd me as well as he could with this, but I found he was very Thoughtful, and that tho' he was very kind to me, and kiss'd me a thousand Times, and more I believe, and gave me Money too, yet he offer'd no more all the while we were together, which was above two Hours, and which I much wonder'd at, considering how it us'd to be, and what Opportunity we had.

His Brother did not come from *London*, for five or six Days, and it was two Days more, before he got an Opportunity to talk with him; but then getting him by himself, he talk'd very close to him about it; and the same Evening found Means (for we had a long Conference together)

to repeat all their Discourse to me, which as near as I can remember, was to the purpose following. He *told him* he heard strange News of him since he went, (*viz.*) that he made Love to Mrs. *Betty*: Well, *says his* Brother, a little angrily, And what then? What has any body to do with that? Nay *says his* Brother, don't be angry *Robin*, I don't pretend to have any thing to do with it; but I find they do concern themselves about it, and that they have used the poor Girl ill about it, which I should take as done to my self; Who do you mean by *THEY?* *says Robin*. I mean my Mother, and the Girls, *says the elder Brother*.

But hark ye, *says his* Brother, are you in Earnest, do you really Love the Girl? Why then, *says Robin*, I will be free with you, I do love her above all the Women in the World, and I will have her, let *them say and do what they will*, I believe the Girl will not deny me.

It stuck me to the Heart when he *told me this*, for tho' it was most rational to think *I* would not deny him, yet *I* knew in my own Conscience, *I* must, and *I* saw my Ruin in my being oblig'd to do so; but *I* knew it was my business to Talk otherwise then, so *I* interrupted him in his Story thus: Ay! *said I*, does he think *I* cannot deny him? but he shall find *I* can deny him for all that. Well my dear, *says he*, but let me give you the whole Story as it went on between us, and then say what you will.

Then he went on and *told me*, that he reply'd thus: But Brother, you know She has nothing, and you may have several Ladies with good Fortunes: 'Tis no matter for that, *said Robin*, I Love the Girl; and I will never please my Pocket in Marrying, and not please my Fancy; And so my Dear, *adds he*, there is no opposing him.

Yes, yes, *says I*, I can oppose him, I have learnt to say NO now, tho' I had not learnt it before; if the best Lord in

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the Land offer'd me Marriage now, I could very chear-
fully say NO to him.

Well, but my Dear, *says he*, What can you say to him? You know, as you said before, he will ask you many Questions about it, and all the House will wonder what the meaning of it should be.

Why *says I*, smiling, I can stop all their Mouths at one Clap, by telling him and them too, that I am Married already to his elder Brother.

He smil'd a little too at the Word, but I could see it Startled him, and he could not hide the disorder it put him into: however, he return'd, Why tho' that may be true, in some Sense, yet I suppose you are but in Jest, when you talk of giving such an Answer as that, it may not be convenient on many Accounts.

No, no, *says I pleasantly*, I am not so fond of letting that Secret come out, without your Consent.

But what then can you say to them, *says he*, when they find you possitive against a Match, which would be apparently so much to your Advantage? Why *says I*, should I be at a loss? First, I am not oblig'd to give them any Reason: on the other hand, I may tell them, I am married already, and stop there, and that will be a full Stop too to him, for he can have no Reason to ask one Question after it.

Ay, *says he*, but the whole House will teize you about that, and if you deny them positively, they will be disoblig'd at you, and Suspicious besides.

Why, *says I*, What can I do? What would you have me do? I was in strait enough before, as *I told you*, and acquainted you with the Circumstances, that I might have your Advice.

My dear, *says he*, I have been considering very much

upon it, you may be sure, and tho' the Advice has many Mortifications in it to me, and may at first seem Strange to you, yet all Things consider'd, I see no better way for you, than to let him go on; and if you find him hearty and in Earnest, Marry him.

I gave him a look full of Horror at those Words, and turning Pale as Death, was at the very point of sinking down out of the Chair I sat in: When giving a start, my Dear, *says he aloud*, What's the matter with you? Where are you agoing? and a great many such Things; and with jogging and calling to me, fetch'd me a little to my self, tho' it was a good while before I fully recover'd my Senses, and was not able to speak for several Minutes.

When I was fully recover'd, he began again; My dear, *says he*, I would have you consider seriously of it: you may see plainly how the Family stand in this Case, and they would be stark Mad if it was my Case, as it is my Brother's, and for ought I see, it would be my Ruin and yours too.

Ay! *says I*, still speaking angrily; Are all your Protests and Vows to be shaken by the dislike of the Family? Did I not always object that to you, and you made a light thing of it, as what you were above, and would not Value; and is it come to this now? Is this your Faith and Honour, your Love, and the Solidity of your Promises?

He continued perfectly Calm, notwithstanding all my Reproaches, and I was not sparing of them at all; but *he reply'd* at last, My Dear, I have not broken one Promise with you yet; I did tell you I would Marry you when I was come to my Estate; but you see my Father is a hail, healthy Man, and may live these thirty Years still, and not be Older than several are round us in the Town; and you never propos'd my Marrying you sooner, because

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you know it might be my Ruin; and as to the rest, I have
not fail'd you in any thing.

I could not deny a Word of this, but why then, *says I*,
can you perswade me to such a horrid Step, as leaving you,
since you have not left me? Will you allow no Affection,
no Love on my Side, where there has been so much on
your Side? Have I made you no Returns? Have I given
no Testimony of my Sincerity, and of my Passion? Are
the Sacrifices I have made of Honour and Modesty to
you, no Proof of my being ty'd to you in Bonds too strong
to be broken?

But here my Dear, *says he*, you may come into a safe
Station, and appear with Honour, and the Remembrance
of what we have done, may be wrapt up in an eternal Si-
lence, as if it had never happen'd; you shall always have
my sincere Affection, only then it shall be Honest, and
perfectly Just to my Brother; you shall be my Dear Sister,
as now you are my Dear——and there he stop'd.

Your dear Whore, *says I*, you would have said, and you
might as well have said it; but I understand you: How-
ever, I desire you to remember the long Discourses you
have had with me, and the many Hours' pains you have
taken to perswade me to believe my self an honest Wo-
man; that I was your Wife intentionally, and that it was
as effectual a Marriage that had pass'd between us, as if
we had been publickly Wedded by the Parson of the Par-
ish; you know these have been your own Words to me.

I found this was a little too close upon him, but I made
it up in what follows; he stood stock still for a while, and
said nothing, and I went on thus; you cannot, *says I*, with-
out the highest injustice believe that I yielded upon all
these Perswasions without a Love not to be questioned,
not to be shaken again by any thing that could happen

afterward: If you have such dishonourable Thoughts of me, I must ask you what Foundation have I given for such a Suggestion.

If then I have yielded to the Importunities of my Affection; and if I have been perswaded to believe that I am really your Wife, shall I now give the Lye to all those Arguments, and call my self your Whore, or Mistress, which is the same thing? And will you Transfer me to your Brother? Can you transfer my Affection? Can you bid me cease loving you, and bid me love him? Is it in my Power think you, to make such a Change at Demand? No Sir, *said I*, depend upon it 'tis impossible, and whatever the Change on your Side may be, I will ever be true; and I had much rather, since it is come that unhappy Length, be your Whore than your Brother's Wife.

He appear'd pleas'd, and touch'd with the impression of this last Discourse, and told me that he stood where he did before; that he had not been Unfaithful to me in any one Promise he had ever made yet, but that there were so many terrible things presented themselves to his View in the Affair before me, that he had thought of the other as a Remedy, only that he thought this would not be an entire parting us, but we might love as Friends all our Days, and perhaps with more Satisfaction than we should in the Station we were now in: That he durst say, I could not apprehend any thing from him, as to betraying a Secret, which could not but be the Destruction of us both if it came out: That he had but one Question to ask of me, that could lye in the way of it, and if that Question was answer'd, he could not but think still it was the only Step I could take.

I guess'd at his Question presently, *viz.* Whether I was not with Child? As to that, *I told him*, he need not be

concern'd about it, for I was not with Child; why then my Dear, *says he*, we have no time to Talk farther now; Consider of it, I cannot but be of the Opinion still, that it will be the best Course you can take; and with this, he took his Leave, and the more hastily too, his Mother and Sisters Ringing at the Gate, just at the Moment he had risen up to go.

He left me in the utmost Confusion of Thought; and he easily perceiv'd it the next Day, and all the rest of the Week, but he had no Opportunity to come at me all that Week, till the *Sunday* after, when I being indispos'd did not go to Church, and he making some Excuse stay'd at Home.

And now he had me an Hour and Half again by my self, and we fell into the same Arguments all over again; at last, *I ask'd him warmly*, what Opinion he must have of my Modesty, that he could suppose, I should so much as entertain a thought of lying with two Brothers? And assur'd him it could never be: *I added*, if he was to tell me that he would never see me more, than which nothing but Death could be more Terrible, yet I could never entertain a Thought so Dishonourable to my self, and so Base to him; and therefore, I entreated him, if he had one Grain of Respect or Affection left for me, that he would speak no more of it to me, or that he would pull his Sword out and Kill me. He appear'd surpriz'd at my Obsstinacy, as he call'd it, *told me* I was unkind to my self, and unkind to him in it; that it was a Crisis unlook'd for upon us both, but that he did not see any other way to save us both from Ruin, and therefore he thought it the more Unkind; but that if he must say no more of it to me, he added with an unusual Coldness, that he did not know any thing else we had to talk of; and so he rose up to take his leave; I rose

up too, as if with the same indifference, but when he came to give me as it were a parting Kiss, I burst out into such a Passion of Crying, that tho' I would have spoke, I could not, and only pressing his Hand, seem'd to give him the Adieu, but cry'd vehemently.

He was sensibly mov'd with this; so he sat down again, and said a great many kind things to me, but still urg'd the necessity of what he had proposed; all the while insisting, that if I did refuse, he would notwithstanding provide for me; but letting me plainly see, that he would decline me in the main Point; nay, even as a Mistress; making it a point of Honour not to lye with the Woman, that for ought he knew, might one time or other come to be his Brother's Wife.

The bare loss of him as a Gallant was not so much my Affliction, as the loss of his Person, whom indeed I lov'd to Distraction; and the loss of all the Expectations I had, and which I always built my Hopes upon, of having him one Day for my Husband: These things oppress'd my Mind so much, that in short, the agonies of my Mind, threw me into a high Fever, and long it was, that none in the Family expected my Life.

I was reduc'd very low indeed, and was often Delirious; but nothing lay so near me, as the fear, that when I was light Headed, I should say something or other to his Prejudice, I was distress'd in my Mind also to see him, and so he was to see me, for he really lov'd me most passionately; but it could not be; there was not the least Room to desire it on one side, or other.

It was near five Weeks that I kept my Bed, and tho' the violence of my Fever abated in three Weeks, yet it several times return'd; and the Physicians said two or threetimes they could do no more for me, but that they must leave

Nature and the Distemper to fight it out: After the end of five Weeks I grew better, but was so weak, so alter'd, and recover'd so slowly, that the Physicians apprehended I should go into a Consumption; and which vex'd me most, they gave their Opinion, that my Mind was oppress'd, that something troubl'd me, and, in short, that I was *I N L O V E*; upon this, the whole House set upon me to press me to tell, whether I was in Love or not, and with who[m]? but as I well might, I deny'd my being in Love at all.

They had on this Occasion a Squabble one Day about me at Table, that had like to put the whole Family in an Uproar, they happen'd to be all at Table, but the Father; as for me I was Ill, and in my Chamber: At the beginning of the Talk, the old Gentlewoman who had sent me somewhat to Eat, bid her Maid go up, and ask me if I would have any more; but the Maid brought down Word, I had not Eaten half what she had sent me already. Alas, *says the old Lady*, that poor Girl; I am afraid she will never be well. Well! *says the elder Brother*, How should Mrs. *Betty* be well, *they say she is in Love?* I believe nothing of it, *says the old Gentlewoman*. I don't know, *says the eldest Sister*, what to say to it, they have made such a rout about her being so Handsome, and so Charming, and I know not what, and that in her hearing too, that has turn'd the Creature's Head I believe, and who knows what possessions may follow such doings? for my Part I don't know what to make of it.

Why Sister, you must acknowledge she is very Handsome, *says the elder Brother*. Ay, and a great deal Handsomer than you Sister, *says Robin*, *and that's your Mortification*. Well, well, that is not the Question, *says his Sister*, the Girl is well enough, and she knows it, she need not be told of it to make her Vain.

We don't talk of her being Vain, *says the elder Brother*, but of her being in Love; may be she is in Love with herself, it seems my Sisters think so.

I would she was in Love with me, *says Robin*, I'd quickly put her out of her Pain. What d'ye mean by that Son? *says the old Lady*, how can you talk so? Why Madam, *says Robin* again, very honestly, do you think I'd let the poor Girl die for Love, and of me too, that is so near at hand to be had. Fye Brother, *says the second Sister*, how can you talk so? Would you take a Creature that has not a Groat in the World? Prithee Child, *says Robin*, Beauty's a Portion, and good Humour with it, is a double Portion; I wish thou hadst half her Stock of both for thy Portion: So there was her Mouth stop'd.

I find, *says the eldest Sister*, if *Betty* is not in Love, my Brother is; I wonder he has not broke his Mind to *Betty*, I warrant she won't say N O. They that yield when they are ask'd, *says Robin*, are one step before them that were never ask'd to yield, and two Steps before them that yield before they are ask'd; And that's an Answer to you Sister.

This fir'd the Sister, and she flew into a Passion, and said, things were come to that pass, that it was time the Wench, *meaning me*, was out of the Family; and but that she was not fit to be turn'd out, she hop'd her Father and Mother would consider of it, as soon as she could be remov'd.

Robin reply'd, That was for the Master and Mistress of the Family, who were not to be taught by One, that had so little Judgment as his eldest Sister.

It run up a great deal farther; the Sister Scolded, *Robin* Rally'd and Banter'd, but poor *Betty* lost ground by it extreamly in the Family: I heard of it, and cry'd heartily, and the old Lady came up to me, some body having told

her that I was so much concern'd about it: I complain'd to her, that it was very hard the Doctors should pass such a Censure upon me, for which they had no Ground; and that it was still harder, considering the Circumstances I was under in the Family; that I hop'd I had done nothing to lessen her Esteem for me, or given any occasion for the Bickering between her Sons and Daughters; and I had more need to think of a Coffin, than of being in Love, and beg'd she would not let me suffer in her Opinion for anybody's Mistakes, but my own.

She was sensible of the Justice of what I said, but *told me*, since there had been such a Clamour among them, and that her younger Son talk'd after such a rattling way as he did; she desir'd I would be so Faithful to her, as to Answer her but one Question sincerely; I told her I would, and with the utmost Plainness and Sincerity: Why then the Question was, Whether there was any thing between her son *Robert* and me? I told her with all the Protestations of Sincerity that I was able to make, and as I might well do, that there was not, nor ever had been; I *told her*, that Mr. *Robert* had rattled and jested, as she knew it was his way, and that I took it always as I suppos'd he meant it, to be a wild airy way of Discourse that had no Signification in it; And assured her, that there was not the least tittle of what she understood by it between us; and that those who had Suggested it, had done me a great deal of Wrong, and Mr. *Robert* no Service at all.

The old Lady was fully satisfy'd, and kiss'd me, spoke chearfully to me, and bid me take care of my Health, and want for nothing, and so took her leave: But when she came down, she found the Brother and all his Sisters together by the Ears; they were angry even to Passion, at his upbraiding them with their being Homely, and having

never had any Sweet hearts, never having been ask'd the Question, their being so forward as almost to ask first, *and the like*: He rallied them with Mrs. *Betty*; how Pretty, how good Humour'd, how she Sung better than they did, and Danc'd better, and how much Handsomer she was; and in doing this, he omitted no Ill-natur'd Thing that could vex them. The old Lady came down in the height of it, and to stop it, told them the Discourse she had had with me, and how I answer'd, that there was nothing between Mr. *Robert* and I.

She's wrong there, *says Robin*, for if there was not a great deal between us, we should be closer together than we are: I told her I Love'd her hugely, *says he*, but I could never make the Jade believe I was in Earnest; I do not know how you should, *says his Mother*, no body in their Senses could believe you were in Earnest, to Talk so to a poor Girl, whose Circumstances you know so well.

But Prithee Son *adds she*, since you tell us you could not make her believe you were in Earnest, what must we believe about it? for you ramble so in your Discourse, that no body knows whether you are in Earnest or in Jest; But as I find the Girl by your own Confession has answer'd truly, I wish you would do so too, and tell me seriously, so that I may depend upon it; Is there any thing in it or no? Are you in Earnest or no? Are you Distracted indeed, or are you not? 'Tis a weighty Question, I wish you would make us easy about it.

By my Faith Madam *says Robin*, 'tis in vain to mince the Matter, or tell any more Lyes about it, I am in Earnest, as much as a Man is, that's going to be Hang'd. If Mrs. *Betty* would say she Lov'd me, and that she would Marry me, I'd have her to-morrow Morning fasting; and say, *To have, and to hold*, instead of eating my Breakfast.

Well, *says the Mother*, Then there's one Son lost; and she said it in a very mournful Tone, as one greatly concern'd at it. I hope not Madam, *says Robin*, no Man is lost, when a good Wife has found him. Why but Child, *says the old Lady*, she is a Beggar. Why then Madam, she has the more need of Charity *says Robin*; I'll take her off the hands of the Parish, and she and I'll Beg together. It's bad Jesting with such things, *says the Mother*. I don't Jest Madam, *says Robin*: We'll come and beg your Pardon, Madam; and your Blessing, Madam, and my Father's. This is all out of the way Son, *says the Mother*, if you are in Earnest you are Undone. I am afraid not, *says he*, for I am really afraid she won't have me, after all my Sister's huffing, I believe I shall never be able to persuade her to it.

That's a fine Tale indeed, she is not so far gone neither, Mrs. *Betty* is no Fool, *says the youngest Sister*, do you think she has learn'd to say N O, any more than other People? No, Mrs. *Mirth-Wit*, *says Robin*, Mrs. *Betty*'s no Fool, but Mrs. *Betty* may be engaged some other way, And what then? Nay, *says the eldest Sister*, we can say nothing to that, Who must it be to then? She is never out of the Doors, it must be between you. I have nothing to say to that, *says Robin*, I have been examined enough, there's my Brother, if it must be *between us*, go to work with him.

This stung the *elder Brother* to the Quick, and he concluded that *Robin* had discover'd something; However, he kept himself from appearing disturb'd; Prithee, *says he*, Don't go to sham your Stories off upon me, I tell you, I deal in no such Ware, I have nothing to say to no Mrs. *Betty*'s in the Parish; and with that he rose up, and brush'd off. No, *says the eldest Sister*, I dare answer for my Brother, he knows the World better.

Thus the Discourse ended; but it left the *eldest Brother* quite confounded: He concluded his Brother had made a full Discovery, and he began to doubt, whether I had been concern'd in it, or not; but with all his Management, he could not bring it about to get at me; at last he was so perplex'd, that he was quite Desperate, and resolv'd he would see me whatever came of it: In order to this, he contriv'd it so, that one Day after Dinner, watching *his eldest Sister*, till he could see her go up Stairs, he runs after her, *Hark ye Sister, says he, Where is this sick Woman? may not a Body see her? Yes, says the Sister, I believe you may, but let me go in first a little, and I'll tell you; so she run up to the Door, and gave me Notice, and presently call'd to him again: Brother, says she, you may come in if you please; so in he came, just in the same kind of Rant: Well, says he, at the Door, as he came in, Where's this sick Body that's in Love? How do ye do Mrs. Betty? I would have got up out of my Chair, but was so weak I could not for a good while; and he saw it, and his Sister too, and she said, Come do not strive to stand up, my Brother desires no Ceremony, especially, now you are so Weak. No, no, Mrs. Betty, Pray sit still, says he, and so sits himself down in a Chair over against me, and appear'd as if he was mighty Merry.*

He talk'd a deal of rambling Stuff to his Sister, and to me, sometimes of one thing, sometimes another, on purpose to amuse her, and every now and then would turn it upon the old Story: *Poor Mrs. Betty, says he, It is a sad thing to be in Love, why it has reduced you sadly; at last I spoke a little, I am glad to see you so merry, Sir, says I, but I think the Doctor might have found something better to do, than to make his Game of his Patients: If I had been Ill of no other Distemper, I know the Proverb too*

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well to have let him come to me: What Proverb? *says he*:
What,

*"Where Love is the Case,
The Doctor's an Ass."*

Is that not it Mrs. *Betty*? I smil'd, and said nothing: Nay, *says he*, I think the Effect has prov'd it to be Love; for it seems the Doctor has done you little Service, you mend very slowly, they say, I doubt there's somewhat in it, Mrs. *Betty*, I doubt you are sick of the Incurables. I smil'd and said, No, *indeed Sir*, that's none of my Distemper.

We had a deal of such Discourse, and sometimes others that signified as little; by and by he ask'd me to sing them a Song; at which I smil'd, and said, my singing Days were over: At last he ask'd me, if he should Play upon his Flute to me; his Sister said she believ'd my Head could not bear it; I bow'd and said, Pray Madam do not hinder it, I love the Flute very much; then his Sister said, well do then Brother; with that he pull'd out the Key of his Closet; Dear Sister, *says he*, I am very Lazy, do step and fetch my Flute, it lies in such a Drawer, naming a Place where he was sure it was not, that she might be a little while a looking for it.

As soon as she was gone, he related the whole Story to me of the Discourse his Brother had about me, and his concern about it, which was the Reason of his contriving this Visit. I assured him, I had never opened my Mouth, either to his Brother, or to any Body else: I told him the dreadful Exigence I was in; that my Love to him, and his offering to have me forget that Affection, and remove it to another, had thrown me down; and that I had a Thousand times wish'd I might Dye, rather than Recover, and

to have the same Circumstances to struggle with as I had before : I added, that I foresaw, that as soon as I was well, I must quit the Family, and that as for marrying his Brother, I abhor'd the thoughts of it, after what had been my Case with him, and that he might depend upon it, I would never see his Brother again upon that Subject: That if he would break all his Vows and Oaths, and Engagements with me, be that between his Conscience and himself: But he should never be able to say, that I who he had perswaded to call my self his Wife, and who had given him the Liberty to use me as a Wife, was not as Faithful to him as a Wife ought to be, whatever he might be to me.

He was going to reply, and had said, That he was sorry I could not be perswaded, and was a going to say more, but he heard his Sister a coming, and so did I ; and yet I forced out these few Words as a reply, That I could never be perswaded to Love one Brother and Marry the other: He shook his Head, and said, *Then I am ruin'd*, meaning himself; and that Moment his Sister enter'd the Room, and told him she could not find the Flute: Well *says he merrily*, *This Laziness won't do*, so he gets up and goes himself to look for it, but comes back without it too, not but that he could have found it, but he had no mind to Play; and, besides, the Errand he sent his Sister on was answer'd another way; for he only wanted to speak to me, which he had done, tho' not much to his Satisfaction.

I had however a great deal of Satisfaction in having spoken my Mind to him in Freedom, and with such an honest Plainness, as I have related; and tho' it did not at all work the way I desired, *that is to say*, to oblige the Person to me the more; yet it took from him all Possibility of quitting me, but by a down right breach of Honour, and

It was not many Weeks after this, before I was about the House again, and began to grow well; but I continued Melancholly and Retir'd, which amaz'd the whole Family, except he that knew the Reason of it; yet it was a great while before he took any Notice of it, and I, *as backward to speak as he*, carried as respectfully to him, but never offer'd to speak a Word that was Particular of any kind whatsoever; and this continued for Sixteen or Seventeen Weeks; so that as I expected every Day to be dismiss'd the Family, on Account of what Distaste they had taken another way, in which I had no Guilt, I expected to hear no more of this Gentleman, after all his solemn Vows, but to be ruin'd and abandon'd.

At last I broke the way my self in the Family, for my Removing; for being talking seriously with the old Lady one Day, about my own Circumstances, and how my Distemper had left a Heaviness upon my Spirits; The old Lady said, I am afraid *Betty*, what I have said to you about my Son, has had some Influence upon you, and that you are Melancholly on his Account; Pray will you let me know how the Matter stands with you both? If it may not be improper, for as for *Robin*, he does nothing but Rally and Banter when I speak of it to him: Why truly madam, *said I*, that Matter stands as I wish it did not, and I shall be very Sincere with you in it, whatever befalls me. Mr. *Robert* has several times propos'd Marriage to me, which is what I had no Reason to expect, my poor Circumstances consider'd; but I have always resisted him, and that perhaps in Terms more positive than became me, considering the Regard that I ought to have for every Branch of

your Family: But, *said I*, Madam, I could never so far forget my Obligations to you, and all your House, to offer to Consent to a Thing which I knew must needs be Disobliging to you, and have positively told him that I would never entertain a Thought of that kind, unless I had your Consent, and his Father's also, to whom I was bound by so many invincible Obligations.

And is this possible, *Mrs. Betty*, says the Old Lady? *Then you have been much Juster to us than we have been to you; for we have all look'd upon you as a kind of a Snare to my Son; and I had a Proposal to make you, for your Removing for fear of it; but I had not yet mention'd it to you, because I was afraid of grieving you too much, least it should throw you down again, for we have a Respect for you still, tho' not so much as to have it be the Ruin of my Son; but if it be as you say, we have all wrong'd you very much.*

As to the Truth of what I say, Madam, *said I*, I refer to your Son himself, if he will do me any Justice, he must tell you the Story just as I have told it.

Away goes the Old Lady to her Daughters, and tells them the whole Story, just as I had told it her, and they were surpris'd at it, you may be sure, as I believ'd they would be; one said she could never have thought it, another said *Robin* was a Fool; a Third said, she would not believe a Word of it, and she would warrant that *Robin* would tell the Story another way; but the old Lady, who was resolv'd to go to the bottom of it, before I could have the least Opportunity of acquainting her Son with what had pass'd, resolv'd too, that she would talk with her Son immediately, and to that purpose sent for him, for he was gone but to a Lawyer's House in the Town, and upon her sending he returned immediately.

Upon his coming up to them, for they were all together,

Sit down *Robin*, *says the old Lady*, I must have some talk with you; with all my Heart, Madam, *says Robin*, looking very *Merry*, I hope it is about a good Wife, for I am at a great Loss in that Affair: How can that be, *says his Mother*, did you not say you resolv'd to have Mrs. *Betty*? Ay Madam, *says Robin*, but there is one that has forbid *the Banns*: Forbid the Banns, who can that be? Even Mrs. *Betty* herself, *says Robin*. How so, *says his Mother*, have you ask'd her the Question then? *Yes indeed Madam*, *says Robin*, I have attack'd her in Form five times since she was Sick, and am beaten off: the Jade is so stout, she won't Capitulate, nor Yield upon any Terms, except such as I can't effectually grant: Explain your self, *says the Mother*, for I am surpris'd, I do not understand you, I hope you are not in Earnest.

Why, Madam, *says he*, the Case is plain enough upon me, it explains its self; she won't have me, *she says*, is not that plain enough? I think 'tis plain, and pretty rough too; Well, but, *says the Mother*, you talk of Conditions, that you cannot grant, what does she want a Settlement? Her Joynter ought to be according to her Portion; what does she bring? Nay, as to Fortune, *says Robin*, she is rich enough; I am satisfied in that Point; but 'tis I that am not able to come up to her Terms, and she is positive she will not have me without.

Here the Sisters put in, Madam, *says the Second Sister*, 'tis impossible to be serious with him, he will never give a direct Answer to any thing; you had better let him alone, and talk no more of it, you know how to dispose of her out of his way. *Robin* was a little warm'd with his Sister's Rudeness, but he was even with her presently; there are two sorts of People, Madam, *says he*, turning to his Mother, that there is no contending with, that is a wise Body and a

Fool, 'tis a little hard I should engage with both of them together.

The younger Sister then put in, we must be Fools indeed, *says she*, in my Brother's Opinion, that he should make us believe, he has seriously ask'd Mrs. *Betty* to marry him, and she has refus'd him.

Answer, and Answer not, says *Solomon*, *reply'd her Brother*: When your Brother had said that he had ask'd her no less than five Times, and that she positively denied him, methinks a younger Sister need not question the Truth of it, when her Mother did not: My Mother you see did not understand it, *says the Second Sister*: There's some Difference, *says Robin*, between desiring me to explain it, and telling me she did not believe it.

Well but Son, *says the Old Lady*, if you are disposed to let us into the Mystery of it, What were these hard Conditions? Yes Madam, *says Robin*, I had done it before now, if the Teasers here had not worried me by way of Interruption: The Conditions are, that I bring my Father and you to Consent to it, and without that, she protests she will never see me more upon that Head; and the Conditions, *as I said*, I suppose I shall never be able to Grant; I hope my warm Sisters will be answer'd now, and blush a little.

This Answer was surprising to them all, tho' less to the Mother, because of what I had said to her; as to the Daughters they stood Mute a great while; but the Mother said with some Passion, Well I heard this before, *but I could not believe it*, but if it is so, then we have all done *Betty* wrong, and she has behav'd better than I expect'd; Nay, *says the eldest Sister*, if it is so, she has acted Handsomely indeed: I confess, *says the Mother*, it was none of her Fault, if he was enough Fool to take a Fancy to her; but to give such an Answer to him, shews more Respect

to us, than I can tell how to express; I shall value the Girl the better for it, as long as I know her. But I shall not, *says* Robin, unless you will give your Consent: I'll consider of that a while, *says the Mother*, I assure you, if there were not some other Objections, this Conduct of hers would go a great way to bring me to Consent: I wish it would go quite thro' with it, *says* Robin; if you had as much thought about making me easy, as you have about making me Rich, you would soon Consent to it.

Why Robin, *says the Mother again*, are you really in Earnest? Would you fain have her? Really Madam, *says* Robin, I think 'tis hard you should question me again upon that Head; I won't say that I will have her, how can I resolve that Point, when you see I cannot have her without your Consent; but this I will say, I am Earnest, that I will never have any Body else, if I can help it; *Betty* or no Body is the Word, and the Question which of the Two shall be in your Breast to decide Madam, provided only, *That my good humour'd Sisters here, may have no Vote in it.*

All this was dreadful to me, for the Mother began to yield, and *Robin* press'd her Home in it: On the other hand, she advised with the Eldest Son, and he used all the Arguments in the World to perswade her to consent; alledging his Brother's Passionate Love for me, and my generous Regard to the Family, in refusing my own Advantages upon such a nice Point of Honour, and a Thousand such Things: And as to the Father, he was a Man in a hurry of publick Affairs, and getting Money, seldom at Home, thoughtful of the main Chance, but left all those things to his Wife.

You may easily believe, that when the Plot was thus, *as they thought broke out*: It was not so Difficult, or so Dangerous, for the Elder Brother, who no Body suspected

of any thing, to have a freer Access than before: Nay, the Mother, *which was just as he wished*, Propos'd it to him to talk with Mrs. *Betty*: it may be Son, *said she*, you may see farther into the Thing than I; and see if she has been so Positive as *Robin* says she has been, or no. This was as well as he could wish, and he as it were yielding to talk with me at his Mother's Request, she brought me to him into her own Chamber; told me her Son had some Business with me at her Request, and then she left us together, and he shut the Door after her.

He came back to me, and took me in his Arms and kiss'd me very Tenderly; but told me it was now come to that Crisis, that I should make my self Happy or Miserable, as long as I liv'd: That if I could not comply to his Desire, we should both be Ruin'd: Then he told me the whole Story between *Robin*, as he call'd him, and his Mother, and his Sisters, and himself, as above: And now dear Child, *says he*, consider what it will be to marry a Gentleman of a good Family, in good Circumstances, and with the Consent of the whole House, and to enjoy all that the World can give you; And what on the other hand, to be sunk into the dark Circumstances of a Woman that has lost her Reputation; and that tho' I shall be a private Friend to you while I live, yet as I shall be suspected always, so you will be afraid to see me, and I shall be afraid to own you.

He gave me no time to Reply, but went on with me thus: *What has happened between us Child, so long as we both agree to do so, may be buried and forgotten: I shall always be your sincere Friend, without any Inclination to nearer Intimacy, when you become my Sister; and we shall have all the honest part of Conversation without any Reproaches between us, of having done amiss: I beg of you to consider it, and do not*

stand in the way of your own Safety and Prosperity; and to satisfy you that I am Sincere, added he, I here offer you Five Hundred Pounds to make you some amends for the Freedoms I have taken with you, which we shall look upon as some of the Follies of our Lives, which 'tis hoped we may repent of.

He spoke this in so much more moving Terms than it is possible for me to express, that you may suppose as he held me above an Hour and Half in that Discourse, so he answer'd all my Objections, and fortified his Discourse with all the Arguments that humane Wit and Art could devise.

I cannot say however, that any thing he said made Impression enough upon me, so as to give me any thought of the Matter, till he told me at last very plainly, that if I refus'd, he was sorry to add, that he could never go on with me in that Station as we stood before; that tho' he lov'd me as well as ever, and that I was as agreeable to him; yet the Sense of Virtue had not so forsaken him as to suffer him to lye with a Woman that his Brother courted to make his Wife; that if he took his Leave of me, with a denial from me in this Affair, whatever he might do for me in the Point of Support, grounded on his first Engagement of maintaining me, yet he would not have me be surpris'd, that he was obliged to tell me, he could not allow himself to see me any more; and that indeed I could not expect it of him.

I received this last Part with some Tokens of Surprize and Disorder, and had much ado, to avoid sinking down, for indeed I lov'd him to an Extravagance, not easy to imagine; but he perceiv'd my Disorder, and entreated me to consider seriously of it, assured me that it was the only way to preserve our mutual Affection; that in this Station we might love as Friends, with the utmost Passion, and

with a love of Relation untainted, free from our own just Reproaches, and free from other People's Suspicions: That he should ever acknowledge his happiness owing to me; that he would be Debtor to me as long as he liv'd, and would be paying that Debt as long as he had Breath: Thus he wrought me up, in short, to a kind of Hesitation in the Matter; having the Dangers on one Side represented in lively Figures, and indeed heighten'd by my Imagination of being turn'd out to the wide World, a meer Cast-off Whore, *for it was no less*, and perhaps expos'd as such; with little to provide for myself; with no Friend, no Acquaintance in the whole World, *out of that Town*, and there I could not pretend to stay; all this terrify'd me to the last Degree, and he took care upon all Occasions to lay it home to me, in the worst Colours; on the other hand, he fail'd not to set forth the easy prosperous Life, which I was going to live.

He answer'd all that I could object from Affection, and from former Engagements, with telling me the Necessity that was before us of taking other Measures now; and as to his Promises of Marriage, the Nature of things, *he said*, had put an End to that, by the Probability of my being his Brother's Wife, before the time to which his Promises all referr'd.

Thus in a Word, I may say, he reason'd me out of my Reason; he conquer'd all my Arguments, and I began to see a Danger that I was in, which I had not considered of before, and that was, of being drop'd by both of them, and left alone in the World to shift for my self.

This, and his Perswasion, at length prevail'd with me to Consent, tho' with so much Relu&ctance, that it was easy to see I should go to Church, like a Bear to the Stake; I had some little Apprehensions about me too, lest my

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new Spouse, who by the way, I had not the least Affection
for, should be Skilful enough to Challenge me on another
Account, upon our first coming to Bed together; but
whether he did it with design or not, I know not; but his
elder Brother took care to make him very much Fuddled
before he went to Bed, so that I had the Satisfaction of a
drunken Bedfellow the first Night: How he did it I know
not, but I concluded that he certainly contriv'd it, that
his Brother might be able to make no Judgment of the
difference between a Maid and a married Woman, nor
did he ever entertain any Notions of it, or disturb his
Thoughts about it.

I should go back a little here, to where I left off; the
elder Brother having thus managed me, his next Business
was to manage his Mother, and he never left till he had
brought her to acquiesce, and be passive even without ac-
quainting the Father, other than by Post Letters: So that
she consented to our Marrying privately, leaving her to
manage the Father afterwards.

Then he cajol'd with his Brother, and perswaded him
what Service he had done him, and how he had brought
his Mother to Consent, which tho' True, was not indeed
done to serve him, but to serve himself; but thus diligent-
ly did he cheat him, and had the Thanks of a faithful
Friend for shifting off his Whore into his Brother's Arms
for a Wife. So naturally do Men give up Honour and
Justice, and even Christianity to secure themselves.

I must now come back to Brother *Robin*, as we always
call'd him, who having got his Mother's Consent, *as
above*, came big with the News to me, and told me the
whole Story of it, with a Sincerity so visible, that I must
confess it griev'd me, that I must be the Instrument to
abuse so honest a Gentleman; but there was no Remedy,

he would have me, and I was not oblig'd to tell him, that I was his Brother's Whore, tho' I had no other way to put him off; so I came gradually into it, and behold we were married.

Modesty forbids me to reveal the Secrets of the Marriage Bed, but nothing could have happen'd more suitable to my Circumstances than that, *as above*, my Husband was so Fuddled when he came to Bed, that he could not remember in the Morning, whether he had had any Conversation with me or no, and I was obliged to tell him *be bad*, tho' in reality *be bad not*, that I might be sure he could make no enquiry about any thing else.

It concerns the Story in Hand very little to enter into the farther Particulars of the Family, or of my self, for the five Years that I liv'd with this Husband, only to observe that I had two Children by him, and that at the end of the five Years he died: He had been really a very good Husband to me, and we liv'd very agreeably together; but as he had not received much from them, and had in the little time he liv'd acquir'd no great Matters, so my Circumstances were not great, nor was I much mended by the Match: Indeed I had preserv'd the elder Brother's Bonds to me, to pay me 500*l.* which he offered me for my Consent to marry his Brother; and this, with what I had saved of the Money he formerly gave me, and about as much more by my Husband, left me a Widow with about 1200*l.* in my Pocket.

My two Children were indeed taken happily off of my Hands, by my Husband's Father and Mother, and that was all they got by Mrs. *Betty*.

I confess I was not suitably affected with the loss of my Husband; nor can I say, that I ever lov'd him as I ought to have done, or was suitable to the good Usage I had

from him, for he was a tender, kind, good humour'd Man as any Woman could desire; but his Brother being so always in my Sight, *at least while we were in the Country*, was a continual Snare to me; and I never was in Bed with my Husband, but I wish'd my self in the Arms of his Brother; and tho' his Brother never offer'd me the least Kindness that way, after our Marriage, but carried it just as a Brother ought to do; yet it was impossible for me to do so to him: In short, I committed Adultery and Incest with him every Day in my Desires, which without doubt, was as effectually Criminal.

Before my Husband dy'd, his elder Brother was married, and we being then remov'd to *London*, were written to by the old Lady to come and be at the Wedding; my Husband went, but I pretended Indisposition, so I staid behind; for in short, I could not bear the sight of his being given to another Woman, tho' I knew I was never to have him my self.

I was now as above, left loose to the World, and being still young and handsome, as every Body said of me, *and I assure you I thought my self so*, and with a tolerable Fortune in my Pocket, I put no small Value upon my self: I was courted by several very considerable Tradesmen, and particularly very warmly by one, a *Linnen-Draper*, at whose House, after my Husband's Death, I took a Lodging, his Sister being my Acquaintance; here I had all the Liberty and Opportunity to be Gay, and appear in Company that I could desire; my Landlord's Sister being one of the Maddest, Gayest things alive, and not so much Mistress of her Virtue as I thought at first she had been: She brought me into a World of wild Company, and even brought home several Persons, *such as she lik'd well enough to Gratify*, to see her pretty Widow: Now as Fame and

Fools make an Assembly, I was here wonderfully caress'd; had abundance of Admirers, and such as call'd themselves *Lovers*; but I found not one fair Proposal among them all; as for their common Design, that I understood too well to be drawn into any more Snares of that Kind: The case was alter'd with me, I had Money in my Pocket, and had nothing to say to them: I had been trick'd once by *that Cheat call'd Love*, but the Game was over, I was resolv'd now to be married or nothing, and to be well married or not at all.

I lov'd the Company indeed of Men of Mirth and Wit, and was often entertain'd with such, as I was also with others; but I found by just Observation, that the brightest Men came upon the dullest Errand, *that is to say*, the dullest, as to what I aim'd at; on the other hand, those who came with the best Proposals were the dullest and most disagreeable Part of the World: I was not averse to a Tradesman, but then I would have a Tradesman, Forsooth, that was something of a Gentleman too; that when my Husband had a mind to carry me to the Court, or to the Play, he might become a Sword, and look as like a Gentleman as another Man; and not like one that had the mark of his Apron-strings upon his Coat, or the mark of his Hat upon his Perriwig; that should look as if he was set on to his Sword, when his Sword was put on to him, and that carried his Trade in his Countenance.

Well, at last I found this amphibious Creature, this *Land-water-thing*, call'd, *a Gentleman-Tradesman*, and as a just Plague upon my Folly, I was catch'd in the very Snare *which, as I might say*, I laid for my self.

This was a Draper too, for tho' my Comrade would have bargain'd for me with her Brother; yet when they came to the Point, it was it seems for a Mistress, and I

kept true to this Notion, that a Woman should never be kept for a Mistress, that had Money to make her self a Wife.

Thus my Pride, not my Principle, my Money, not my Vertue, kept me Honest; tho', as it prov'd, I found I had much better have been Sold by my *She Comrade*, to her Brother, than have sold my self as I did to a Tradesman, that was Rake, Gentleman, Shop-keeper, and Beggar all together.

But I was hurried on (by my Fancy to a Gentleman) to Ruin my self in the grossest Manner that ever Woman did; for my new Husband coming to a lump of Money at once, fell into such a Profusion of Expence, that all I had, and all he had, would not have held it out above one Year.

He was very fond of me for about a quarter of a Year, and what I got by that, was, that I had the Pleasure of seeing a great deal of my Money spent upon my self. *Come my Dear*, says he to me one Day, *shall we go and take a turn into the Country for a Week?* Ay my dear, says I, Whither would you go? *I care not whither*, says he, *but I have a mind to look like Quality for a Week, we'll go to Oxford*, says he: How, says I, shall we go, I am no Horse-Woman, and 'tis too far for a Coach: Too far, says he, *no Place is too far for a Coach and Six: If I carry you out, you shall Travel like a Dutchess*: Hum, says I, my Dear, 'tis a Frolick, but if you have a mind to it, I don't care. Well, the time was appointed, we had a Rich Coach, very good Horses, a Coachman, Postillion, and two Footmen in very good Liveries; a Gentleman on Horseback, and a Page with a Feather in his Hat upon another Horse; the Servants all call'd him my Lord, and I was her Honour, the Countess, and thus we travel'd to *Oxford*, and a pleasant Journey we had; for give him his due, not a Beggar alive knew better how to

be a Lord than my Husband: We saw all the Rarities at *Oxford*, talk'd with two or three Fellows of Colleges, about putting a Nephew, that was left to his Lordship's Care to the University, and of their being his Tutors; we diverted our selves with bantering several other poor Scholars, with the hopes of being at least his Lordship's Chaplain and putting on a Scarf; and thus having liv'd like Quality indeed, as to Expence, we went away for *Northampton*, and in a Word, in about Twelve Days' ramble came Home again, to the Tune of about 93*l.* Expence.

Vanity is the Perfection of a Fop; my Husband had this Excellence, that he valued nothing of Expence; as his History, you may be sure, has very little weight in it, 'tis enough to tell you, that in about two Years and a Quarter he Broke, got into a *Spunging-House*, being arrested in an Action too heavy for him to give Bail to, so he sent for me to come to him.

It was no surprise to me, for I had foreseen *some-thing before* that all was going to Wreck, and had been taking care to reserve something if I could for my self: But when he sent for me, he behav'd much better than I expected: He told me plainly, he had plaid the Fool, and suffer'd himself to be surpriz'd, which he might have prevented: that now he foresaw he could not stand it, and therefore he would have me go Home, and in the Night take away every thing I had in the House of any Value, and secure it; and after that, he told me, that if I could get away 100*l.* or 200*l.* in Goods out of the Shop, I should do it; only, *says he*, let me know nothing of it, neither what you take, or whither you carry it; for as for me, *says he*, I am resolv'd to get out of this House and be gone; and if you never hear of me more, *My Dear*, *says he*, *I wish you well; I am only sorry for the Injury I have done you*: He said

some very handsome Things to me indeed at Parting; for I told you he was a *Gentleman*, and that was all the Benefit I had of his being so; that he used me very handsomely, even to the last, only spent all I had, and left me to Rob the Creditors for something to subsist on.

However, I did as he bad me, *that you may be sure*, and having thus taken my leave of him I never saw him more; for he found means to break out of the Bailiff's House that Night, or the next: How I knew not, for I could come at no Knowledge of anything, more than this, that he came Home about three a Clock in the Morning, caus'd the rest of his Goods to be remov'd into the *Mint*, and the Shop to be shut up; and having rais'd what Money he could, he got over to *France*, from whence I had one or two Letters from him, and no more.

I did not see him when he came Home, for he having given me such Instructions as above, and I having made the best of my Time, I had no more Business back again at the House, not knowing but I might have been stop'd there by the Creditors; for a *Commission of Bankrupt*, being soon after Issued, they might have stop'd me by Orders from the *Commissioners*: But my Husband having desperately got out from the Bailiff's by letting himself down from almost the top of the House, to the top of another Building, and leaping from thence, which was almost two Stories, and which was enough indeed to have broken his Neck: He came home and got away his Goods, before the Creditors could come to Seize, *that is to say*, before they could get out the Commission, and be ready to send their Officers to take Possession.

My Husband was so civil to me, *for still I say he was much of a Gentleman*, that in the first Letter he wrote me, he let me know where he had Pawn'd 20 Pieces of fine

Holland for 30*l.* which were worth above 90*l.*, and enclos'd me the Token, for the taking them up, paying the Money, which I did, and made in time above 100*l.* of them, having Leisure to cut them, and sell them to private Families, as opportunity offer'd.

However, with all this, and all that I had secur'd before, I found upon casting things up, my Case was very much alter'd, and my Fortune much lessen'd; for including the *Hollands*, and a parcel of fine Muslins, which I carry'd off before, and some Plate, and other things; I found I could hardly muster up 500*l.* and my Condition was very odd, for tho' I had no Child, (*I had had one by my Gentleman Draper, but it was buried,*) yet I was a Widow bewitch'd, I had a Husband, and no Husband, and I could not pretend to Marry again, though I knew well enough my Husband would never see *England* any more, if he liv'd fifty Years: *Thus I say,* I was limited from Marriage, what Offer soever might be made me; and I had not one Friend to advise with, in the Condition I was in, at least not one who I could Trust the Secret of my Circumstances to, for if the Commissioners were to have been inform'd where I was, I should have been fetch'd up, and all I had sav'd be taken away.

Upon these Apprehensions, the first thing I did, was to go quite out of my Knowledge, and go by another Name: This I did effectually, for I went into the *Mint* too, took Lodgings in a very private Place, dress'd me up in the Habit of a Widow, and call'd my self Mrs. *Flanders*.

Here, however, I conceal'd my self, and tho' my new Acquaintance knew nothing of me, yet I soon got a great deal of Company about me; and whether it be that Women are scarce among the People that generally are to be found there; or that some Consolations in the Miseries of

that Place, are more requisite than on other Occasions, I soon found that an agreeable Woman was exceedingly valuable among the Sons of Affliction there; and that those that cou'd not pay Half a Crown in the Pound to their Creditors, and run in Debt at the Sign of the *Bull* for their Dinners, would yet find Money for a Supper, if they lik'd the Woman.

However, I kept myself safe yet, tho' I began like my Lord Rochester's Mistress, that lov'd his Company, but would not admit him farther, to have the Scandal of a Whore, without the Joy; and upon this score, tir'd with the Place, and with the Company too, I began to think of Removing.

It was indeed a Subject of strange Reflection to me, to see Men in the most perplex'd Circumstances, who were reduc'd some Degress below being ruin'd, whose Families were Objects of their own Terror and other People's Charity; yet while a Penny lasted, nay, even beyond it, endeavouring to drown their Sorrow in their Wickedness; heaping up more Guilt upon themselves, labouring to forget former things, which now it was the proper time to remember, making more Work for Repentance, and Sinning on, as a Remedy for Sin past.

But it is none of my Talent to preach; these Men were too wicked, even for me; there was something horrid and absurd in their way of Sinning, for it was all a force even upon themselves; they did not only act against Conscience, but against Nature, and nothing was more easy than to see how Sighs would interrupt their Songs, and paleness and anguish sit upon their Brows, in spight of the forc'd Smiles they put on; nay, sometimes it would break out at their very Mouths, when they had parted with their Money for a lewd Treat, or a wicked Embrace; I have heard

them, turning about, fetch a deep Sigh, and cry *what a Dog am I!* Well *Betty*, my Dear, I'll drink thy health tho', meaning the *Honest Wife*, that perhaps had not a Half Crown for herself, and three or four Children: The next Morning they were at their Penitentials again, and perhaps the poor weeping Wife comes over to him, either brings him some Account of what his Creditors are doing, and how she and the Children are turn'd out of Doors, or some other dreadful News; and this adds to his self Reproaches; but when he has thought and por'd on it till he is almost Mad, having no Principles to support him, nothing within him, or above him, to Comfort him; but finding it all Darkness on every Side, he flies to the same Relief again, *viz.* to drink it away, debauch it away, and falling into Company of Men in just the same Condition with himself, he repeats the Crime, and thus he goes every Day one Step onward of his way to Destruction.

I was not wicked enough for such Fellows as these *yet*, on the contrary, I began to consider here *very seriously* what I had to do; how things stood with me, and what Course I ought to take: I knew I had no Friends, no not one Friend or Relation in the World; and that little I had left apparently wasted, which when it was gone, I saw nothing but Misery and Starving was before me: Upon these Considerations, I say, and fill'd with Horror at the Place I was in, *I resolv'd to be gone*.

I had made an Acquaintance with a sober good sort of a Woman, who was a Widow too like me, but in better Circumstances; her Husband had been a Captain of a Ship, and having had the Misfortune to be Cast away coming Home from the *West Indies*, was so reduc'd by the Loss, that tho' he had saved his Life then, it broke his

Heart, and kill'd him afterwards, and his Widow being persued by the Creditors, was forc'd to take Shelter in the *Mint*: She soon made things up with the help of Friends, and was at Liberty again; and finding that I rather was there to be conceal'd, than byany particular Prosecutions, and finding also that I agreed with her, *or rather she with me* in a just Abhorrence of the Place, and of the Company; she invited me to go home with her, till I could put myself in some posture of settling in the World to my Mind; withal telling me, that it was Ten to One, but some good Captain of a Ship might take a Fancy to me, and Court me, in that part of the Town where she liv'd.

I accepted of her Offer, and was with her half a Year, and should have been longer, but in that interval what she propos'd to me happen'd to herself, and she marry'd very much to her Advantage; but whose Fortune soever was upon the Increase, mine seem'd to be upon the Wane, and I found nothing present, except two or three Boat-swains, or such Fellows, but as for the Commanders they were generally of two Sorts. 1. Such as having good Business, *that is to say*, a good Ship, resolv'd not to Marry, but with Advantage. 2. Such as being out of Employ, wanted a Wife to help them to a Ship, I mean, (1). A Wife, who having some Money could enable them to hold a good part of a Ship themselves, so to encourage Owners to come in; or (2.) A Wife, who if she had not Money, had Friends who were concern'd in Shipping, and so could help to put the young Man into a good Ship, and neither of these was my Case; so I look'd like one that was to *lie on Hand*.

This Knowledge I soon learnt by Experience, *viz.* That the State of Things was altered, as to Matrimony, that Marriages were here the Consequences of politick

Schemes, for forming Interests, carrying on Business, and that Love had no Share, or but very little in the Matter.

That, as my Sister in Law, at *Colchester* had said, Beauty, Wit, Manners, Sense, good Humour, good Behaviour, Education, Virtue, Piety, or any other Qualification, whether of Body or Mind, had no power to recommend: That Money only made a Woman agreeable: That Men chose Mistresses indeed by the gust of their Affection, and it was requisite for a Whore to be Handsome, well shap'd, have a good Mein, and a graceful Behaviour; but that for a Wife, no Deformity would shock the Fancy, no ill Qualities the Judgment; the Money was the thing; the Portion was neither crooked, or Monstrous, but the Money was always agreeable, whatever the Wife was.

On the other Hand, as the Market run all on the Mens side, I found the Women had lost the Privilege of saying No; that it was a Favour now for a Woman to have *The Question ask'd*, and if any young Lady had so much Arrogance as to Counterfeit a Negative, she never had the Opportunity of denying twice; much less of Recovering that false Step, and accepting what she had seem'd to decline: The Men had such Choice every where, that the Case of the Women was very unhappy; for they seem'd to Ply at every Door, and if the Man was by great Chance refus'd at one House, he was sure to be receiv'd at the next.

Besides this, I observ'd that the Men made no scruple to set themselves out, and to go a Fortune-Hunting, *as they call it*, when they had really no Fortune themselves to demand it, or Merit to deserve it; and they carry'd it so high, that a Woman was scarce allow'd to enquire after

the Character or Estate, of the Person that pretended to her: This, I had an Example of, in a young Lady at the next House to me, and with whom I had contracted an Intimacy; she was Courted by a young Captain, and tho' she had near 2000*l.* to her Fortune, she did but enquire of some of his Neighbours about his Character, his Morals, or Substance; and he took Occasion at the next Visit to let her know, truly, that he took it very ill, and that he should not give her the Trouble of his Visits any more: I heard of it, and I had begun my Acquaintance with her, I went to see her upon it: She enter'd into a close Conversation with me about it, and unbosom'd herself very freely; I perceiv'd presently that tho' she thought herself very ill us'd, yet she had no power to resent it; that she was exceedingly piqu'd she had lost him, and particularly that another of less Fortune had gain'd him.

I fortify'd her Mind against such a Meanness, *as I call'd it*; I told her, that as low as I was in the World, I would have despis'd a Man that should think I ought to take him upon his own Recommendation only; also *I told her*, that as she had a good Fortune, she had no need to stoop to the Disaster of the Times; that it was enough, that the Men could insult us that had but little Money, but if she suffer'd such an Affront to pass upon her without resenting it, she would be render'd low-priz'd upon all Occasions, that a Woman can never want an Opportunity to be reveng'd of a Man that has us'd her ill, and that there were ways enough to humble such a Fellow as that, or else certainly Women were the most unhappy Creatures in the World.

She was very well pleas'd with the Discourse, and told me seriously that she would be very glad to make him sensible of her resentment, and either to bring him on

again, or have the Satisfaction of her Revenge being as publick as possible.

I told her, that if she would take my Advice, I would tell her how she should obtain her Wishes in both those things; and that I would engage I would bring the Man to her Door again, and make him beg to be let in: *She smil'd at that*, and soon let me see, that if he came to her Door, her resentment was not so great, to let him stand long there.

However, she listened very willingly to my Offer of Advice; so *I told her*, that the first thing she ought to do, was a piece of Justice to herself; namely, that whereas he had reported among the Ladies, that he had left her, and pretended to give the Advantage of the Negative to himself, she should take care to have it well spread among the Women, which she could not fail of an Opportunity to do, that she had enquired into his Circumstances, and found he was not the Man he pretended to be: Let them be told too Madam, *said I*, that you found he was not the Man you expected, and that you thought it was not safe to meddle with him, that you heard he was of an ill Temper, and that he boasted how he had us'd the Women ill upon many Occasions, and that particularly he was debauch'd in his Morals, &c. The last of which indeed had some Truth in it; but I did not find that she seem'd to like him much the worse for that part.

She came most readily into all this, and immediately she went to Work to find Instruments, she had very little difficulty in the Search; for telling her Story in general to a Couple of her Gossips, it was the Chat of the Tea Table all over that part of the Town, and I met with it wherever I visited: Also, as it was known that I was acquainted with the young Lady her self, my Opinion was ask'd very

often, and I confirm'd it with all the necessary Aggravations, and set out his Character in the blackest Colours; and as a piece of secret Intelligence, *I added*, what the Gossips knew nothing of, *viz.* That I had heard he was in very bad Circumstances; that he was under a necessity of a Fortune to support his Interest with the Owners of the Ship he Commanded: That his own Part was not paid for, and if it was not paid quickly, his Owners would put him out of the Ship, and his Chief Mate was likely to Command it, who offer'd to buy that Part which the Captain had promis'd to take.

I added, for I was heartily piqu'd at the Rogue, *as I call'd him*, that I had heard a Rumour too, that he had a Wife alive at *Plymouth*, and another in the *West Indies*, a thing which they all knew was not very uncommon for such kind of Gentlemen.

This work'd as we both desir'd it, for presently the young Lady at the next Door, *who had a Father and Mother that Govern'd both her, and her Fortune*, was shut up, and her Father forbid him the House: Also in one Place more the Woman had the Courage, *however strange it was*, to say No; and he could try nowhere but he was Reproached with his Pride, and that he pretended not to give the Women leave to enquire into his Character, *and the like*.

By this time he began to be sensible of his mistake; and seeing all the Women on that side the Water alarm'd, he went over to *Ratcliff*, and got access to some of the Ladies there; but tho' the young Women there too, were according to the Fate of the Day, pretty willing to be ask'd, yet such was his ill luck, that his Character follow'd him over the Water; so that tho' he might have had Wives enough, yet it did not happen among the Women that had good Fortunes, which was what he wanted.

But this was not all; she very ingeniously manag'd another thing her self, for she got a young Gentleman, who was a Relation, to come and visit her two or three times a Week in a very fine Chariot and good Liveries, and her two Agents and I also, presently spread a Report all over, that this Gentleman came to Court her; that he was a Gentleman of a Thousand Pounds a Year, and that he was fallen in Love with her, and that she was going to her Aunt's in the City, because it was inconvenient for the Gentleman to come to her with his Coach to *Rotherbith*, the Streets being so narrow and difficult.

This took immediately, the Captain was laugh'd at in all Companies, and was ready to hang himself; he tried all the ways possible to come at her again, and wrote the most passionate Letters to her in the World, and in short, by great Application, obtained leave to wait on her again, *as he said*, only to clear his Reputation.

At this meeting she had her full Revenge of him; for *she told him*, she wonder'd what he took her to be, that she should admit any man to a Treaty of so much Consequence, as that of Marriage, without enquiring into his Circumstances; that if he thought she was to be huff'd into Wedlock, and that she was in the same Circumstances which her Neighbours might be in, *viz.* to take up with the first good Christian that came, he was mistaken; that in a word his Character was really bad, or he was very ill behoden to his Neighbours; and that unless he could clear up some Points, in which she had justly been prejudiced, she had no more to say to him, but give him the Satisfaction of knowing, that she was not afraid to say NO, either to him, or any Man else.

With that she told him what she had heard, *or rather rais'd herself by my Means, of his Character*; his not having

paid for the Part he pretended to own of the Ship he Commanded; of the Resolution of his Owners to put him out of the Command, and to put his Mate in his stead; and of the Scandal rais'd on his Morals; his having been reproach'd with such and such Women, and his having a Wife at *Plymouth*, and another in the *West-Indies*, and the like; and she ask'd him whether she had not good Reason, if these things were not clear'd up, to refuse him and to insist upon having Satisfaction in Points so significant as they were?

He was so confounded at her Discourse, that he could not answer a Word, and she began to believe that all was true, by his Disorder, tho' she knew that she had been the Raiser of these Reports herself.

After some time he recovered a little, and from that time was the most humble, modest, and importunate Man alive in is Courtship.

She ask'd him if he thought she was so at her last Shift, that she could or ought to bear such Treatment, and if he did not see that she did not want those who thought it worth their while to come farther to her than he did, meaning the Gentleman whom she had brought to visit her by way of sham.

She brought him by these Tricks to submit to all possible Measures to satisfy her, as well of his Circumstances, as of his Behaviour. He brought her undeniable Evidence of his having paid for his part of the Ship; he brought her Certificates from his Owners, that the Report of their intending to remove him from the Command of the Ship, was false and groundless; in short, he was quite the reverse of what he was before.

Thus I convinced her, that if the Men made their Advantage of our Sex in the Affair of Marriage, upon the

Supposition of there being such a Choice to be had, and of the Women being so easy, it was only owing to this, that the Women wanted Courage to maintain their Ground, and that according to my Lord Rochester

*"A Woman's ne'er so ruin'd but she can
Revenge herself on her Undoer, Man."*

After these things this young Lady plaid her part so well, that tho' she resolv'd to have him, and that indeed having him was the main bent of her Design, yet she made his obtaining her to be T O H I M the most difficult thing in the World; and this she did, not by a haughty reserv'd Carriage, but by a just Policy, playing back upon him his own Game; for as he pretended by a kind of lofty Carriage, to place himself above the occasion of a Character, she broke with him upon that Subject, and at the same time that she made him submit to all possible enquiry after his Affairs, she apparently shut the Door against his looking into her own.

It was enough to him to obtain her for a Wife, as to what she had, she told him plainly, that as he knew her Circumstances, it was but just she should know his; and tho' at the same time he had only known her Circumstances by common Fame, yet he had made so many Protestations of his Passion for her, that he could ask no more but her Hand to his grand Request, *and the like ramble according to the Custom of Lovers:* In short, he left himself no room to ask any more Questions about her Estate, and she took the Advantage of it; for she placed part of her Fortune so in Trustees, without letting him know anything of it, that it was quite out of his Reach, and made him be very well contented with the rest.

It is true she was pretty well besides, *that is to say*, she

had about 1400*l.* in Money, which she gave him, and the other, after some time, she brought to light, as a Perquisite to herself, which he was to accept as a mighty Favour, seeing, though it was not to be his, it might ease him in the Article of her Particular Expences; and I must add, that by this Conduct, the Gentleman himself became not only more humble in his Applications to her to obtain her, but also was much the more an obliging Husband when he had her: I cannot but remind the Ladies how much they place themselves below the common Station of a Wife, which if I may be allow'd not to be Partial, is low enough already; *I say*, they place themselves below their common Station, and prepare their own Mortifications, by their submitting so to be insulted by the Men before-hand, which I confess I see no Necessity of.

This Relation may serve therefore to let the Ladies see, that the Advantage is not so much on the other Side, as the Men think it is; and that tho' it may be true, the Men have but too much Choice among us; and that some Women may be found, who will Dishonour themselves, be Cheap, and too Easy to come at; yet if they will have Women worth having, they may find them as uncomeatable as ever; and that those that are otherwise have often such Deficiencies, *when bad*, as rather recommend the Ladies that are difficult, than encourage the Men to go on with their easy Courtship, and expect Wives equally valuable that will come at first Call.

Nothing is more certain, than that the Ladies always gain of the Men, by keeping their Ground, and letting their pretended Lovers see they can R resent being slighted, and that they are not afraid of saying N O. They insult us mightily, with telling us of the Number of Women;

that the Wars and the Sea, and Trade, and other Incidents have carried the Men so much away, that there is no Proportion between the Numbers of the Sexes; but I am far from granting that the Number of the Women is so great, or the Number of the Men so small; but if they will have me tell the Truth, the Disadvantage of the Women is a terrible Scandal upon the Men, and it lies here only; *Namely*, that the Age is so wicked, and the Sex so Debauch'd, that in short the Number of such Men, as an honest Woman ought to meddle with, is small indeed; and it is but here and there that a Man is to be found who is fit for an honest Woman to venture upon.

But the Consequence even of that too amounts to no more than this; that Women ought to be the more Nice; for how do we know the just Character of the Man that makes the Offer? To say that the Woman should be the more easy on this Occasion, is to say, we should be the forwarder to venture, because of the greatness of the Danger, which is very absurd.

On the contrary, the Women have ten Thousand times the more Reason to be wary, and backward, by how much the hazard of being betray'd is the greater, and would the Ladies act the wary Part, they would discover every Cheat that offer'd; for, *in short*, the Lives of very few Men now-a-Days will bear a Character; and if the Ladies do but make a little Enquiry, they would soon be able to distinguish the Men, and deliver themselves: As for Women that do not think their own Safety worth their own Thought, that impatient of their present State run into Matrimony, as a Horse rushes into the Battle; I can say nothing to them but this, that they are a Sort of Ladies that are to be pray'd for among the rest of distemper'd

People, and they look like People that venture their Estates in a Lottery where there is a Hundred Thousand Blanks to one Prize.

No Man of common Sense will value a Woman the less for not giving up herself at the first Attack, or for not accepting his Proposal without enquiring into his Person or Character; on the contrary, he must think her the weakest of all Creatures, as the Rate of Men now goes: In short, he must have a very contemptible Opinion of her Capacities, that having but one Cast for her Life, shall cast that Life away at once, and make Matrimony like Death, *be a Leap in the Dark.*

I would fain have the Conduct of my Sex a little regulated in this Particular, which is the same thing in which of all the Parts of Life, I think at this time we suffer most in: 'Tis nothing but lack of Courage, the fear of not being married at all, and of that frightful State of Life, call'd *an old Maid.* This, *I say*, is the Woman's Snare; but would the Ladies once but get above that Fear, and manage rightly, they would more certainly avoid it by standing their Ground, in a Case so absolutely necessary to their Felicity, than by exposing themselves as they do; and if they did not marry so soon, they would make themselves amends by marrying safer; she is always married too soon, who gets a bad Husband, and she is never married too late, who gets a good one: In a Word, there is no Woman, *Deformity, or lost Reputation excepted*, but if she manages well, may be married safely one time or other; but if she precipitates herself, it is ten Thousand to one but she is undone.

But I come now to my own Case, in which there was at this time no little Nicety. The Circumstances I was in, made the Offer of a good Husband, the most necessary

thing in the World to me; but I found soon that to be made Cheap and Easy, was not the way: It soon began to be found that the Widow had no Fortune, and to say this, was to say all that was Ill of me: Being well Bred, Handsome, Witty, Modest, and Agreeable; all which I had allow'd to my Character, whether justly, or no, is not to the Purpose: I say, all these would not do without the Dross. In short, *the Widow they said had no Money!*

I resolv'd therefore that it was necessary to change my Station, and make a new Appearance in some other Place, and even to pass by another Name if I found Occasion.

I communicated my Thoughts to my Intimate Friend the Captain's Lady, who I had so faithfully served in her Case with the Captain; and who was as ready to serve me in the same kind as I could desire: I made no scruple to lay my Circumstances open to her, my Stock was but low, for I had made but about 540*l.* at the Close of my last Affair, and I had wasted some of that: However, I had about 460*l.* left, a great many very rich Cloaths, a Gold Watch, and some Jewels, tho' of no extraordinary Value, and about 30*l.* or 40*l.* left in Linnen not dispos'd of.

My Dear and Faithful Friend, the Captain's Wife, was so sensible of the Service I had done her in the Affair above, that she was not only a stiddy Friend to me, but knowing my Circumstances, she frequently made me Presents as Money came into her Hands; such as fully amounted to a Maintainance; so that I spent none of my own; and at last she made this unhappy Proposal to me, *viz.* that as we had observ'd, *as above*, how the Men made no scruple to set themselves out as Persons meriting a Woman of Fortune of their own; it was but just to deal with them in their own way, and if it was possible to deceive the Deceiver.

The Captain's Lady, in short, put this Project into my Head, and told me if I would be rul'd by her I should certainly get a Husband of Fortune, without leaving him any room to Reproach me with want of my own: I told her that I would give up myself wholly to her Directions, and that I would have neither Tongue to speak, or Feet to step in that Affair, but as she should direct me; depending that she would Extricate me out of every Difficulty that she brought me into, which she said she would answer for.

The first Step she put me upon, was to call her Cousin, and go to a Relation's House of hers in the Country, where she directed me; and where she brought her Husband to visit me, and calling me Cousin, she work'd Matters so about, that her Husband and she together invited me most passionately to come to Town and live with them, for they now liv'd in a quite different Place from where they were before. In the next Place she tells her Husband that I had at least 1500*l.* Fortune, and that I was like to have a great deal more.

It was enough to tell her Husband this, there needed nothing on my Side; I was but to sit still and wait the Event, for it presently went all over the Neighbourhood that the young Widow at Captain ——'s was a Fortune, that she had at least 1500*l.*, and perhaps a great deal more, and *that the Captain said so*, and if the Captain was ask'd at any time about me, he made no scruple to affirm it, tho' he knew not one Word of the Matter, other than that his Wife had told him so; and in this he thought no Harm, for he really believ'd it to be so. With the Reputation of this Fortune, I presently found myself bless'd with Admirers enough, and that I had my Choice of Men, as they said they were, *which by the way confirms what I was saying*

before: This being my Case, I who had a subtil Game to Play, had nothing now to do but to single out from them all, the properest Man that might be for my Purpose; *that is to say*, the Man who was most likely to depend upon the *bear say* of Fortune, and not enquire too far into the Particulars; and unless I did this, *I did nothing*, for my Case would not bear much Enquiry.

I pick'd out my Man without much Difficulty, by the Judgment I made of his way of courting me: I had let him run on with his Protestations that he lov'd me above all the World; that if I would make him happy, that was enough; all which I knew was upon Supposition that I was very Rich, tho' I never told him a Word of it my self.

This was my Man, but I was to try him to the Bottom, and indeed in that consisted my Safety, for if he baulked, I knew I was undone, as surely as he was undone if he took me; and if I did not make some scruple about his Fortune, it was the way to lead him to raise some about mine; and first therefore, I pretended on all Occasions to doubt his Sincerity, and told him, perhaps he only courted me for my Fortune; he stop'd my Mouth in that Part, with the Thunder of his Protestations *as above*, but still I pretended to doubt.

One morning he pulls off his Diamond Ring, and writes upon the Glass of the Sash in my Chamber this Line,

You I love, and you alone.

I read it and ask'd him to lend me the Ring, with which I wrote under it thus,

And so in Love says every one.

He takes his Ring again, and writes another Line thus,

Virtue alone is an Estate.

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I borrowed it again and I wrote under it,

But Money's Virtue, Gold is Fate.

He colour'd as red as Fire to see me turn so quick upon him, and in a kind of Rage told me he would Conquer me, and wrote again thus,

I scorn your Gold, and yet I Love.

I ventur'd all upon the last cast of Poetry, as you'll see, for I wrote boldly under his last.

I'm Poor: Let's see how kind you'll prove.

This was a sad Truth to me, whether he believ'd me or no I could not tell; I supposed then that he did not. However he flew to me, took me in his Arms, and kissing me very eagerly, and with the greatest Passion imaginable, he held me fast till he call'd for a Pen and Ink, *and told me*, he could not wait the tedious writing on a Glass, but pulling out a piece of Paper, he began and wrote again,

Be mine with all your Poverty.

I took his Pen, and follow'd immediately thus,

Yet secretly you hope I Lye.

He told me that was unkind, because it was not just, and that I put him upon contradicting me, which did not consist with good Manners, and therefore since I had insensibly drawn him into this Poetical scribble, he beg'd I would not oblige him to break it off, so he writes again,

Let Love alone be our Debate.

I wrote again,

She loves enough that does not hate.

This he took for a favour, and so laid down the Cudgels,

that is to say, the Pen; I say, he took it for a Favour, and a mighty one it was, if he had known all: However, he took it as I meant it, that is, to let him think I was inclin'd to go on with him, as indeed I had Reason to do, for he was the best humour'd merry sort of a Fellow that I ever met with; and I often reflected how doubly criminal it was to deceive such a Man; but that Necessity, which press'd me to a Settlement suitable to my Condition, was my Authority for it, and certainly his Affection to me, and the Goodness of his Temper, however they might argue against using him ill, yet they strongly argued to me, that he would better take the Disappointment, than some fiery temper'd Wretch, who might have nothing to recommend him but those Passions which would serve only to make a Woman miserable.

Besides, though I had jested with him (as he suppos'd it) so often about my Poverty, yet when he found it to be true, he had fore closed all manner of Objection, seeing, whether he was in jest or in earnest, he had declar'd he took me without any Regard to my Portion, and, whether I was in jest or in earnest, I had declar'd my self to be very Poor, so that, in *a Word*, I had him fast both ways; and tho' he might say afterwards he was cheated, yet he could never say that I had cheated him.

He pursued me close after this, and, as I saw there was no need to fear losing him, I play'd the indifferent Part with him longer than Prudence might otherwise have dictated to me: But I consider'd how much this Caution and Indifference would give me the Advantage over him, when I should come to own my Circumstances to him; and I managed it the more warily, because I found he infer'd from thence, that I had either the more Money, or the more Judgment, and would not venture at all.

I took the freedom one Day to tell him, that it was true I had receiv'd the Compliment of a Lover from him, namely, that he would take me without enquiring into my Fortune, and I would make him a suitable Return in this, *viz.* that I would make as little enquiry into his as consisted with Reason, but I hoped he would allow me to ask some Questions, which he should answer or not as he thought fit; one of these Questions related to our manner of Living, and the Place where, because I had heard he had a great Plantation in *Virginia*, and I told him I did not care to be Transported.

He began from this Discourse to let me Voluntarily into all his Affairs, and to tell me in a frank open way, all his Circumstances, by which I found he was very well to pass in the World; but that great part of his Estate consisted of three Plantations, which he had in *Virginia*, which brought him in a very good Income of about 300*l.* a year; but that if he was to live upon them, would bring him in four times as much; very well, *thought I*, you shall carry me thither then as soon as you please, tho' I won't tell you so before hand.

I jested with him about the Figure he would make in *Virginia*; but found he would do any thing I desired, so I turn'd my Tale; I told him I had good Reason not to desire to go there to live, because if his Plantations were worth so much there, I had not a Fortune suitable to a Gentleman of 1200*l.* a Year, as he said his Estate would be.

He reply'd he did not ask what my Fortune was, he had told me from the beginning he would not, and he would be as good as his Word; but whatever it was, he assured me he would never desire me to go to *Virginia* with him, or go thither himself without me, unless I made it my Choice.

All this, you may be sure, was as I wish'd, and indeed nothing could have happen'd more perfectly agreeable; I carried it on as far as this with a sort of Indifference, that he often wonder'd at, and I mention it the rather to intimate again to the Ladies that nothing but want of Courage for such an Indifference makes our Sex so cheap, and prepares them to be ill us'd as they are; would they venture the Loss of a pretending Fop now and then, who carries it high upon the point of his own Merit, they would certainly be slighted less, and courted more; had I discovered really what my great Fortune was, and that in all I had not full 500*l.* when he expected 1500*l.*, yet I hook'd him so fast, and play'd him so long, that I was satisfied he would have had me in my worst Circumstances; and indeed it was less a Surprize to him when he learnt the Truth, than it would have been, because having not the least Blame to lay on me, who had carried it with an Air of Indifference to the last, he could not say one Word, except that indeed he thought it had been more, but that, if it had been less, he did not repent his Bargain; only that he should not be able to maintain me so well as he intended

In short, we were married, and very happily married on my side, I assure you, *as to the Man*: for he was the best humour'd Man that ever Woman had, but his Circumstances were not so good as I imagined, as on the other hand he had not better'd himself so much as he expected.

When we were married, I was shrewdly put to it to bring him that little Stock I had, and to let him see it was no more; but there was a Necessity for it, so I took my Opportunity one Day when we were alone, to enter into a short Dialogue with him about it. My Dear, *said I*, we have been married a Fortnight, is it not time to let you

know whether you have got a Wife with something or with nothing? *Your own time for that, my Dear*, says he; *I am satisfied I have got the Wife I love; I have not troubled you much*, says he, *with my Enquiry after it*.

That's true, *said I*, but I have a great Difficulty about it, which I scarce know how to manage. *What's that my Dear?* says he. Why, *says I*, 'tis a little hard upon me, and 'tis harder upon you; I am told that Captain —— (meaning my Friend's Husband), has told you I had a great deal more than ever I pretended to have, and I am sure I never employ'd him so to do.

Well, says he, *Captain —— may have told me so, but what then, if you have not so much, that may lye at his Door, but you never told me what you had, so I have no Reason to blame you if you have nothing at all.*

That is so just, *said I*, and so generous, that it makes my having but a little a double Affliction to me.

The less you have my Dear, says he, the worse for us both; but I hope your Affliction is not caus'd for fear I should be unkind to you, for want of a Portion; No, no, if you have nothing tell me plainly, I may perhaps tell the Captain he has cheated me, but I can never say you have, for did not you give it under your Hand that you was Poor, and so I ought to expect you to be.

Well, *said I*, my Dear, I am glad I have not been concern'd in deceiving you before Marriage, if I deceive you since, 'tis ne'er the worse; *that I am Poor*, 'tis too true, but not so Poor as to have nothing neither; so I pull'd out some Bank Bills, and gave him about a Hundred and Sixty Pounds; there is something my Dear, *says I*, and not quite all neither.

I had brought him so near to expecting nothing, by what I had said before, that the Money, tho' the Sum was

small in it self, was doubly welcome; he own'd it was more than he look'd for, and that he did not question by my Discourse to him, but that my fine Cloaths, Gold Watch, and a Diamond Ring or two, had been all my Fortune.

I let him please himself with that 160*l.* two or three Days, and then having been abroad that Day, and as if I had been to fetch it, I brought him a Hundred Pounds more home in Gold, and told him there was a little more Portion for him; and in Short, in about a Week more, I brought him 180*l.* more, and about 60*l.* in Linnen, which I made him believe I had been obliged to take with the 100*l.* which I gave him in Gold, as a Composition for a Debt of 600*l.*, being little more than five Shillings in the Pound, and over-valued too.

And now, my Dear, *says I to him*, I am very sorry to tell you, that I have given you my whole Fortune; I added, that if the Person who had my 600*l.* had not abus'd me, I had been worth a Thousand Pound to him, but that as it was, I had been faithful, and reserv'd nothing to my self, but if it had been more he should have had it.

He was so obliged by the Manner, and so pleas'd with the Sum, for he had been in a terrible Fright least it had been nothing at all, that he accepted it very thankfully: And thus I got over the Fraud of *passing for a Fortune without Money*, and cheating a Man into Marrying me on pretence of it; which, *by the way*, I take to be one of the most dangerous Steps a Woman can take, and in which she runs the most hazzards of being ill used afterwards.

My Husband, to give him his due, was a Man of infinite good Nature, but he was no Fool; and finding his Income not suited to the manner of Living which he had intended, if I had brought him what he expected, and be-

ing under a Disappointment in his return of his Plantations in *Virginia*, he discovered many times his Inclination of going over to *Virginia*, to live upon his own; and often would be magnifying the way of living there, how Cheap, how Plentiful, how Pleasant, *and the like*.

I began presently to understand his meaning, and I took him up very plainly one Morning, and told him that I did so; that I found his Estate turn'd to no Account at this Distance, compar'd to what it would do if he liv'd upon the Spot, and that I found he had a mind to go and live there; that I was sensible he had been disappointed in a Wife, and that finding his Expectations not answer'd that way, I could do no less, to make him amends, than tell him, that I was very willing to go to *Virginia* with him and live there.

He said a Thousand kind things to me upon the Subject of my making such a Proposal to him: He told me that tho' he was disappointed in his Expectations of a Fortune, he was not disappointed in a Wife, and that I was all to him that a Wife could be, but that this Offer was so kind, that it was more than he could express.

To bring the Story short, we agreed to go; *he told me*, that he had a very good House there well furnish'd, that his Mother liv'd in it, and one Sister, which was all the Relations he had; that as soon as he came there, they would remove to another House which was her own for Life, and his after her Decease; so that I should have all the House to my self; and I found it all exactly as he said.

We put on board the *Ship*, *which we went in*, a large quantity of good Furniture for our House, with Stores of Linnen and other Necessaries, and a good Cargoe for Sale, and away we went.

To give an Account of the manner of our Voyage,

which was long and full of Dangers, is out of my way, I kept no Journal, neither did my Husband; all that I can say is, that after a terrible Passage, frightened twice with dreadful Storms, and once with what was still more terrible, I mean a Pyrate, who came on board and took away almost all our Provisions; and, which would have been beyond all to me, they had once taken my Husband, but by Intreaties were prevail'd with to leave him: I say, after all these terrible Things, we arriv'd in *York River* in *Virginia*, and coming to our Plantation, we were received with all the Tenderness and Affection (by my Husband's Mother) that could be express'd.

We liv'd here all together, my Mother-in-law, *at my Entreaty*, continuing in the House, for she was too kind a Mother to be parted with; my Husband likewise continued the same at first, and I thought myself the happiest Creature alive; when an odd and surprizing Event put an end to all that Felicity in a Moment, and rendred my Condition the most uncomfortable in the World.

My Mother was a mighty chearful good humour'd old Woman, I may call her so, for her Son was above Thirty: I say, she was very pleasant good Company, and us'd to entertain *me in Particular*, with abundance of Stories to divert me, as well of the Country we were in, as of the People.

Among the rest, she often told me how the greatest part of the Inhabitants of that Colony came thither in very indifferent Circumstances from *England*; that, generally speaking, they were of two Sorts; either (1.) such as were brought over by Masters of Ships to be sold as Servants; or, (2.) such as are Transported after having been found guilty of Crimes punishable with Death.

When they come here, *says she*, we make no difference,

the Planters buy them, and they work together in the Field till their time is out; when 'tis expir'd, *said she*, they have Encouragement given them to Plant for themselves; for they have a certain Number of Acres of Land allotted them by the Country, and they go to work to clear and cure the Land, and then to Plant it with Tobacco and Corn for their own Use; and as the Merchants will trust them with Tools, and Necessaries, upon the Credit of their Crop before it is grown, so they again Plant every Year a little more than the Year before, and so buy whatever they want with the Crop that is before them. Hence Child, *says she*, many a *Newgate-Bird* becomes a great Man, and we have, *continued she*, several Justices of the Peace, Officers of the train'd Bands, and Magistrates of the Towns they live in, that have been burnt in the Hand.

She was going on with that part of the Story, when her own part in it interrupted her, and with a great deal of good humour'd Confidence she told me, she was one of the second sort of Inhabitants herself; that she came away openly, having venture'd too far in a Particular Case, so that she was become a Criminal, and here's the Mark of it Child, *says she*, and shewed me a very fine white Arm and Hand, but branded in the in-side of the Hand, as in such Cases it must be.

This Story was very moving to me, but my Mother (smiling) said, you need not think such a thing strange, *Daughtier*, for some of the best Men in the Country are burnt in the Hand, and they are not ashame'd to own it; there's Major ——, *says she*, he was an Eminent Pick pocket; there's Justice Ba——r, was a Shoplifter, and both of them were burnt in the Hand, and I could name you several such as they are.

We had frequent Discourses of this kind, and abundance of Instances she gave me of the like; after some

time as she was telling some Stories of one that was Transported but a few Weeks ago, I began in an intimate kind of way, to ask her to tell me something of her own Story, which she did with the utmost Plainness and Sincerity; how she had fallen into very ill Company in *London* in her young Days, occasion'd by her Mother sending her frequently to carry Victuals to a Kinswoman of hers who was a Prisoner in *Newgate*, in a miserable starving Condition, who was afterwards Condemn'd to dye, but having got Respite by pleading her Belly, perish'd afterwards in the Prison.

Here my Mother-in-Law ran out in a long account of the wicked Practices in that dreadful Place, and child, *says my Mother*, perhaps you may know little of it, or it may be have heard nothing about it; but depend upon it, *says she*, we all know here, that there are more Thieves and Rogues made by that one Prison of *Newgate*, than by all the Clubs and Societies of Villains in the Nation; 'tis that cursed Place, *says my Mother*, that half Peoples this Colony.

Here she went on with her own Story so long, and in so Particular a Manner, that I began to be very uneasy, but coming to one Particular that requir'd telling her Name, I thought I should have sunk down in the Place; she perceiv'd I was out of order, and ask'd me if I was not well, and what ail'd me? I told her I was so affected with the melancholly Story she had told, that it had overcome me, and I beg'd of her to talk no more of it: *Why my Dear*, says she very kindly, *what need these things trouble you? These Passages were long before your time, and they give me no Trouble at all now, nay, I look back on them with a Particular Satisfaction, as they have been a Means to bring me to this Place.* Then she went on to tell me how she fell into a good Family, where behaving herself well, and her Mis-

tress dying, her Master married her, by whom she had my Husband and his Sister, and that by her Diligence and good Management after her Husband's Death, she had improved the Plantations to such a degree as they then were, so that most of the Estate was of her getting, not of her Husband's, for she had been a Widow upwards of Sixteen Years.

I heard this part of the Story with very little Attention, because I wanted much to retire and give vent to my Passions, and let any one judge what must be the Anguish of my Mind, when I came to reflect, that this was certainly no more or less *than my own Mother*, and that I had now had two Children, and was big with another by my own Brother, and lay with him still every Night.

I was now the most unhappy of all Women in the World: O! had the Story never been told me, all had been well; it had been no Crime to have lain with my Husband, if I had known nothing of it.

I had now such a Load on my Mind that it kept me perpetually waking; to reveal it I could not find would be to any Purpose, and yet to conceal it would be next to impossible; nay, I did not doubt but I should talk in my Sleep, and tell my Husband of it whether I would or no: If I discover'd it, the least thing I could expect was to lose my Husband, for he was too nice and too honest a Man to have continu'd my Husband after he had known I had been his Sister, so that I was perplex'd to the last Degree.

I leave it to any Man to judge what Difficulties presented to my View, I was away from my Native Country at a Distance prodigious, and the return to me unpassable; I liv'd very well, but in a Circumstance unsufferable in itself; if I had discover'd my self to my Mother, it might be difficult to convince her of the Particulars, and

I had no way to prove them: *On the other hand*, if she had question'd or doubted me, I had been undone, for the bare Suggestion would have immediately separated me from my Husband, without gaining my Mother or him, so that between the Surprize on one hand, and the Uncertainty on the other, I had been sure to be undone.

In the mean time, as I was but too sure of the Fact, I liv'd therefore in open avowed Incest and Whoredom, and all under the appearance of an honest Wife; and tho' I was not much touched with the Crime of it, yet the Action had something in it shocking to Nature, and made my Husband even nauseous to me. However, upon the most sedate Consideration, I resolv'd, that it was absolutely necessary to conceal it all, and not make the least Discovery of it either to Mother or Husband; and thus I liv'd with the greatest Pressure imaginable for three Years more.

During this time my Mother used to be frequently telling me old Stories of her former Adventures, which however were no ways pleasant to me; for by it, tho' she did not tell it me in plain Terms, yet I could understand, joyn'd with what I heard my self, of my first Tutors, that in her younger Days she had been *Whore* and *Thief*; but I verily believe she had liv'd to repent sincerely of both, and that she was then a very Pious, Sober, and Religious Woman.

Well, let her Life have been what it would then, it was certain that my Life was very uneasy to me; for I liv'd, as I have said, but in the worst sort of Whoredom, and as I could expect no good of it, so really no good Issue came of it, and all my seeming Prosperity wore off and ended in Misery and Destruction. It was some time indeed before it came to this, for every thing went wrong with us

afterwards, and that which was worse, my Husband grew strangely alter'd, foward, jealous, and unkind, and I was as impatient of bearing his Carriage, as the Carriage was unreasonable and unjust: These things proceeded so far, and we came at last to be in such ill Terms with one another that I claim'd a Promise of him which he enter'd willingly into with me, when I consented to come from *England* with him, *viz.* that if I did not like to live there, I should come away to *England* again when I pleas'd, giving him a Year's warning to settle his Affairs.

I say, I now claim'd this Promise of him, and I must confess I did it not in the most obliging Terms that could be neither; but I insisted that he treated me ill, that I was remote from my Friends, and could do my self no Justice, and that he was Jealous without Cause, my Conversation having been unblameable, and he having no Pretence for it, and that to remove to *England*, would take away all Occasion from him.

I insisted so peremptorily upon it, that he could not avoid coming to a Point, either to keep his Word with me, or to break it; and this, notwithstanding he used all the Skill he was Master of, and employ'd his Mother and other Agents to prevail with me to alter my Resolutions; indeed the bottom of the thing lay at my Heart, and that made all his Endeavours fruitless, for my Heart was alienated from him. I loathed the Thoughts of Bedding with him, and used a Thousand Pretences of Illness and Humour to prevent his touching me, fearing nothing more than to be with Child again, which to be sure would have prevented, or at least delay'd my going over to *England*.

However, at last I put him so out of Humour that he took up a rash and fatal Resolution, that in short I should not go to *England*; that tho' he had promis'd me, yet it

was an unreasonable thing, that it would be ruinous to his Affairs, would unhinge his whole Family, and be next to an Undoing him in the World; that therefore I ought not to desire it of him, and that no Wife in the World that valued her Family and her Husband's Prosperity, would insist upon such a thing.

This plung'd me again, for when I considered the thing calmly, and took my Husband as he really was, a diligent careful Man, in the main, and that he knew nothing of the dreadful Circumstances that he was in, I could not but confess to my self that my Proposal was very unreasonable, and what no Wife that had the good of her Family at Heart wou'd have desir'd.

But my Discontents were of another Nature; I look'd upon him no longer as a Husband, but as a near Relation, the Son of my own Mother, and I resolv'd some how or other to be clear of him, but which way I did not know.

It is said by *the ill-natur'd World*, of our Sex, that if we are set on a thing, it is impossible to turn us from our Resolutions: *In short*, I never ceas'd poring upon the Means to bring to pass my Voyage, and came that length with my Husband at last, as to propose going without him: This provok'd him to the last degree, and he call'd me not only an unkind Wife, but an unnatural Mother, and ask'd me how I could entertain such a Thought without Horror, as that of leaving my two Children (for one was dead) without a Mother, and never to see them more. *It was true*, had things been right, I should not have done it, but now, *it was* my real desire never to see them, or him either any more; and as to the Charge of unnatural, I could easily answer it to my self, while I knew that the whole Relation was unnatural in the highest degree.

However, there was no bringing my Husband to any

thing; he would neither go with me, or let me go without him, and it was out of my Power to stir without his Consent, as any one that is acquainted with the Constitution of that Country knows very well.

We had many Family Quarrels about it, and they began to grow up to a dangerous Height; for as I was quite estrang'd from him in Affection, so I took no heed to my Words, but sometimes gave him Language that was provoking: *In short*, I strove all I could to bring him to a parting with me, which was what above all things I desir'd most.

He took my Carriage very ill, and indeed he might well do so, for at last I refus'd to Bed with him, and carrying on the Breach upon all occasions to extremity, he told me once he thought I was Mad, and if I did not alter my Conduct, he would put me under Cure; *that is to say, into a Mad-house*: I told him he should find I was far enough from Mad, and that it was not in his power, or any other Villains, to Murther me; I confess at the same time I was heartily frightened at this Thoughts of putting me into a *Mad-house*, which would at once have destroy'd all the possibility of bringing the Truth out; for that then, no one would have given Credit to a word of it.

This therefore brought me to a Resolution, *whatever came of it*, to lay open my whole Case; but which way to do it, or to whom, was an inextricable Difficulty; when another Quarrel with my Husband happen'd, which came up to such an Extream as almost push'd me on to tell it him all to his Face; but tho' I kept it in so as not to come to the particulars, I spoke so much as put him into the utmost Confusion, and in the End brought out the whole Story.

He began with a calm Expostulation upon my being

so resolute to go to *England*; I defended it, and one hard Word bringing on another, as is usual in all Family Strife, *be told me*, I did not treat him as if he was my Husband, or talk of my Children, as if I was a Mother; *and in short*, that I did not deserve to be us'd as a Wife: That he had us'd all the fair Means possible with me; that he had argu'd with all the kindness and calmness, that a Husband or a Christian ought to do, and that I made him such a vile return, that I treated him rather like a Dog than a Man, and rather like the most contemptible Stranger than a Husband: That he was very loth to use Violence with me, but that, *in short*, he saw a Necessity of it now, and that for the future he should be oblig'd to take such Measures as should reduce me to my Duty.

My Blood was now fir'd to the utmost, and nothing could appear more provok'd; I told him, for his fair means and his foul they were equally contemn'd by me; that for my going to *England*, I was resolv'd on it, come what would; and that as to treating him not like a Husband, and not showing my self a Mother to my Children, there might be something more in it than he understood at present; but I thought fit to tell him thus much, that he neither was my lawful Husband, nor they lawful Children, and that I had reason to regard neither of them more than I did.

I Confess I was mov'd to pity him when I spoke it, for he turn'd pale as Death, and stood mute as one Thunder-struck, and once or twice I thought he would have fainted; *in short*, it put him in a Fit something like an Apoplexy; he trembl'd, a Sweator Dew ran off his Face, and yet he was cold as a Clod, so that I was forced to fetch something to keep Life in him; when he recover'd of that, he grew sick and vomited, and in a little after was put to Bed, and the next Morning was in a violent Fever.

However, it went off again, and he recovered, tho' but slowly, and when he came to be a little better, he told me, I had given him a mortal Wound with my Tongue, and he had only one thing to ask before he desir'd an Explanation; I interrupted him, and told him I was sorry I had gone so far, since I saw what disorder it put him into, but I desir'd him not to talk to me of Explanations, for that would but make things worse.

This heighten'd his Impatience, and indeed perplex'd him beyond all bearing; for now he began to suspect that there was some Mystery yet unfolded, but could not make the least guess at it; all that run in his Brain was, that I had another Husband alive, but I assur'd him, there was not the least of that in it; indeed as to my other Husband he was effectually dead to me, and had told me I should look on him as such, so I had not the least uneasiness on that score.

But now I found the thing too far gone to conceal it much longer, and my Husband himself gave me an Opportunity to ease my self of the Secret much to my Satisfaction; he had laboured with me three or four Weeks, *but to no purpose*, only to tell him, whether I had spoken those Words only to put him in a Passion, or whether there was any thing of Truth in the bottom of them: But I continu'd inflexible, and would explain nothing, unless he would first consent to my going to *England*, which he would never do, *he said*, while he liv'd; on the other hand, I said it was in my power to make him willing when I pleas'd, *NAY*, to make him entreat me to go; and this increas'd his Curiosity, and made him importunate to the highest Degree.

At length he tells all this Story to his Mother, and sets her upon me to get it out of me, and she us'd her utmost

Skill indeed; but I put her to a full stop at once, *by telling her* that the Mystery of the whole Matter lay in herself; that it was my Respect to her had made me conceal it, and that, in short, I could go no farther, and therefore conjur'd her not to insist upon it.

She was struck dumb at this Suggestion, and could not tell what to say or to think; but laying aside the Supposition as a Policy of mine, continued her Importance on account of her Son, and if possible, to make up the Breach between us two; as to that, *I told her*, that it was indeed a good Design in her, but that it was impossible to be done; and that if I should reveal to her the Truth of what she desir'd, she would grant it to be impossible, and cease to desire it: At last I seem'd to be prevail'd on by her Importance, and told her I dare trust her with a Secret of the greatest Importance, and she would soon see that this was so, and that I would consent to lodge it in her Breast, if she would engage solemnly not to acquaint her Son with it without my Consent.

She was long in promising this Part, but rather than not come at the main Secret she agreed to that too, and after a great many other Preliminaries, I began and told her the whole Story: First I told her how much she was concern'd in all the unhappy Breach which had happen'd between her Son and me, by telling me her own Story, and her *London* Name; and that the Surprize she see I was in, was upon that Occasion: Then I told her my own Story, and my Name, and assur'd her by such other Tokens, as she could not deny, that I was no other, nor more or less than her own Child, *her Daughter* born of her Body in *Newgate*; the same that had sav'd her from the Gallows by being in her Belly, and that she left in such and such Hands when she was Transported.

It is impossible to express the Astonishment she was in; she was not inclin'd to believe the Story, or to remember the Particulars; for she immediately foresaw the Confusion that must follow in the Family upon it; but every thing concurr'd so exactly with the Stories she had told me of herself, and which, if she had not told me, she would perhaps have been content to have denied, that she had stop'd her own Mouth, and she had nothing to do but take me about the Neck and kiss me, and cry most vehemently over me, without speaking one word for a long time together; at last she broke out, *Unhappy Child!* says she, *What miserable Chance could bring thee bither? and in the Arms of my Son too!* Dreadful girl! says she, why we are all undone! *Married to thy own Brother! Three Children, and two alive, all of the same Flesh and Blood!* *My Son and my Daughter lying together as Husband and Wife!* *All Confusion and Distraction, miserable Family!* *What will become of us? What is to be said? What is to be done?* And thus she run on a great while, nor had I any Power to speak, or if I had, did I know what to say, for every Word wounded me to the Soul: With this kind of Amazement we parted for the first time, tho' my Mother was more surpriz'd than I was, because it was more News to her than to me: However, she promis'd again, that she would say nothing of it to her Son, till we had talk'd of it again.

It was not long, you may be sure, before we had a second Conference upon the same Subject; when, as if she had been willing to forget the Story she had told me of herself, or to suppose that I had forgot some of the Particulars, she began to tell them with Alterations and Omissions; but I refresh'd her Memory, in many things which I supposed she had forgot, and then came in so opportunely with the whole History, that it was impossible for

her to go from it; and then she fell into her Rhapsodies again, and Exclamations at the Severity of her Misfortunes: When these things were a little over with her, we fell into a close Debate about what should be first done before we gave an account of the matter to my Husband. But to what purpose could be all our Consultations? we could neither of us see our way thro it, or how it could be safe to open such a Scene to him; it was impossible to make any judgment, or give any guess at what Temper he would receive it in, or what Measures he would take upon it; and if he should have so little Government of himself, as to make it publick, we easily foresaw that it would be the ruin of the whole Family, and if at last he should take the Advantage the Law would give him, he might put me away with Disdain, and leave me to sue for the little Portion that I had, and perhaps waste it all in the Suit, and then be a Beggar; and thus I should see him perhaps in the Arms of another Wife in a few Months, and be my self the most miserable Creature alive.

My Mother was as sensible of this as I; and upon the whole, we knew not what to do; after some time, we came to more sober Resolutions, but then it was with this Misfortune too, that my Mother's Opinion and mine were quite different from one another, and indeed inconsistent with one another; for my Mother's Opinion was, that I should bury the whole thing entirely, and continue to live with him as my Husband, till some other Event should make the Discovery of it more convenient; and that in the mean time she would endeavour to reconcile us together again, and restore our mutual Comfort and Family Peace; that we might lie as we us'd to do together, and so let the whole matter remain a Secret as close as Death; for Child, *says she*, we are both undone if it comes out.

To encourage me to this, she promis'd to make me easy in my Circumstances, and to leave me what she could at her Death, secur'd for me separately from my Husband; so that if it should come out afterwards, I should be able to stand on my own Feet, and procure Justice too from him.

This Proposal did not agree with my Judgment, tho' it was very fair and kind in my Mother, but my Thoughts run quite another way.

As to keeping the thing in our own Breasts, and letting it all remain as it was, I told her it was impossible; and I ask'd her how she could think I could bear the Thoughts of lying with my own Brother? In the next place I told her, that her being alive was the only support of the Discovery, and that while she own'd me for her Child, and saw reason to be satisfied that I was so, no body else would doubt it; but that if she should die before the Discovery, I should be taken for an impudent Creature that had forg'd such a thing to go away from my Husband, or should be counted Craz'd and Distracted: Then I told her how he had threaten'd already to put me into a Mad-house, and what Concern I had been in about it, and how that was the thing that drove me to the Necessity of discovering it to her as I had done.

From all which I told her, that I had, on the most serious Reflections I was able to make in the Case, come to this Resolution, which I hop'd she would like, as a Medium between both, *viz.* That she should use her endeavours with her Son to give me leave to go for *England*, as I had desired, and to furnish me with a sufficient Sum of Money, either in Goods along with me, or in Bills for my Support there, all along suggesting, that he might one time or other think it proper to come over to me.

That when I was gone she should then in cold Blood,

discover the Case to him gradually, and as her own Discretion should guide; so that he might not be surpriz'd with it, and fly out into any Passions and Excesses; and that she should concern herself to prevent his slighting the Children, or marrying again, unless he had a certain account of my being Dead.

This was my Scheme, and my Reasons were good; I was really alienated from him in the Consequence of these Things; indeed I mortally hated him as a Husband, and it was impossible to remove that riveted Aversion I had to him; *at the same time*, it being an unlawful incestuous Living, added to that Aversion, and every thing add'd to make Cohabiting with him the most nauseous thing to me in the World; and I think verily it was come to such a height, that I could almost as willingly have embrac'd a Dog, as have let him offer any thing of that kind to me, for which Reason I could not bear the Thoughts of coming between the Sheets with him; I cannot say that I was right in carrying it such a length, while at the same time I did not resolve to discover the thing to him; but I am giving an account of what was, not of what ought or ought not to be.

In this directly opposite Opinion to one another my Mother and I continued a long time, and it was impossible to reconcile our Judgments; many Disputes we had about it, but we could never either of us yield our own, or bring over the other.

I insisted on my Aversion to lying with my own Brother; and she insisted upon its being impossible to bring him to consent to my going to *England*; and in this uncertainty we continued, not differing so as to quarrel, or any thing like it; but so as not to be able to resolve what we should do to make up that terrible Breach.

At last I resolv'd on a desperate Course, *and told my Mother* my Resolution, *viz.* That in short, I wou'd tell him of it my self; my Mother was frighted to the last degree at the very Thoughts of it; but *I bid her be easy*, told her I would do it gradually and softly, and with all the Art and good Humour I was Mistress of, and time it also as well as I could, taking him in good Humour too: *I told her*, I did not question but if I cou'd be Hypocrite enough to feign more Affection to him than I really had, I should succeed in all my Design, and we might part by Consent, and with a good Agreement, for I might love him well enough for a Brother tho' I could not for a Husband.

All this while he lay at my Mother to find out, if possible, what was the meaning of that dreadful Expression of mine, as he call'd it, which I mention'd before; namely, *That I was not his lawful Wife, nor my Children his legal Children*: my Mother put him off, told him she could bring me to no Explanations, but found there was something that disturb'd me very much, and she hop'd she should get it out of me in time, and in the mean time recommended to him earnestly to use me more tenderly, and win me with his usual good Carriage; told him of his terrifying and affrighting me with his Threats of sending me to a Mad-house and the like, and advis'd him not to make a Woman Desperate on any account whatever.

He promis'd her to soften his Behaviour, and bid her assure me that he lov'd me as well as ever, and that he had no such design as that of sending me to a Mad-house, whatever he might say in his Passion; also he desir'd my Mother to use the same Perswasions to me too, and we might live together as we us'd to do.

I found the Effects of this Treaty presently; my Husband's Conduct was immediately alter'd, and he was quite

another Man to me; nothing could be kinder and more obliging than he was to me upon all Occasions; and I could do no less than make some return to it, *which I did as well as I could*, but it was but in an awkward manner at best, for nothing was more frightful to me than his Caresses, and the Apprehensions of being with Child again by him, was ready to throw me into Fits; and this made me see that there was an absolute necessity of breaking the Case to him without any more delay, which however I did with all the Caution and Reserve imaginable.

He had continued his alter'd Carriage to me near a Month, and we began to live a new kind of Life with one another; and could I have satisfied my self to have gone on with it, I believe it might have continued as long as we had continu'd alive together. One Evening as we were sitting and talking together under a little Awning, which serv'd as an Arbour at the Entrance into the Garden, he was in a very pleasant agreeable Humour, and said abundance of kind things to me, relating to the Pleasure of our present good Agreement, and the Disorders of our past Breach, and what a Satisfaction it was to him, that we had room to hope we should never have any more of it.

I fetch'd a deep Sigh, and told him there was no Body in the World could be more delighted than I was, in the good Agreement we had always kept up, or more afflicted with the Breach of it, but I was sorry to tell him that there was an unhappy Circumstance in our Case, which lay too close to my Heart, and which I knew not how to break to him, that rendred my part of it very miserable, and took from me all the Comfort of the rest.

He importun'd me to tell him what it was; I told him I could not tell how to do it, that while it was conceal'd from him, I alone was unhappy, but if he knew it also, we should

be both so; and that therefore to keep him in the dark about it was the kindest thing that I could do, and it was on that account alone that I kept a Secret from him, the very keeping of which I thought would first or last be my Destruction.

It is impossible to express his Surprize at this Relation, and the double importunity which he used with me to discover it to him: He told me I could not be call'd kind to him, nay, I could not be faithful to him, if I conceal'd it from him; I told him I thought so too, and yet I could not do it. He went back to what I had said before to him, and told me he hoped it did not relate to what I said in my Passion; and that he had resolv'd to forget all that, as the Effect of a rash provok'd Spirit; I told him I wish'd I could forget it all too, but that it was not to be done, the Impression was too deep, and it was impossible.

He then told me he was resolv'd not to differ with me in any thing, and that therefore he would importune me no more about it, resolving to acquiesce in whatever I did or said; only begg'd I would then agree, that whatever it was, it should no more interrupt our Quiet and our mutual Kindness.

This was the most provoking thing he could have said to me, for I really wanted his farther importunities, that I might be prevail'd with to bring out that which indeed was like Death to me to conceal; so I answer'd him plainly, that I could not say I was glad not to be importuned, tho' I could not tell how to comply; but come, *my Dear, said I*, what Conditions will you make with me upon the opening this Affair to you?

Any Conditions in the World, *said he*, that you can in reason desire of me; well, *said I*, come, give it me under your Hand, that if you do not find I am in any Fault, or

that I am willingly concern'd in the Causes of the Misfortunes that is to follow, you will not blame me, use me the worse, do me any Injury, or make me be the Sufferer for that which is not my fault.

That, *says he*, is the most reasonable Demand in the World; not to blame you for that which is not your fault; give me a Pen and Ink, *says he*, so I ran in and fetch'd Pen, Ink, and Paper, and he wrote the Condition down in the very Words I had proposed it, and sign'd it with his Name; well, *says he*, *what is next*, my Dear? Why, *says I*, the next is, that you will not blame me for not discovering the Secret to you before I knew it. Very just again, *says he*, with all my Heart; so he wrote down that also and sign'd it.

Well, *my Dear*, *says I*, then I have but one Condition more to make with you, and that is, that as there is no body concern'd in it but you and I, you shall not discover it to any Person in the World, except your own Mother; and that in all the Measures you shall take upon the Discovery, as I am equally concern'd in it with you, *tho' as Innocent as yourself*, you shall do nothing in a Passion, nothing to my Prejudice, or to your Mother's Prejudice, without my Knowledge and Consent.

This a little amaz'd him, and he wrote down the Words distinctly, but read them over and over before he sign'd them, hesitating at them several times, and repeating them; *my Mother's Prejudice! and your Prejudice!* What mysterious thing can this be? however, at last he sign'd it.

Well, *says I*, my Dear, I'll ask you no more under your Hand, but as you are to hear the most unexpected and surprizing thing that perhaps ever befel any Family in the World, I beg you to promise me you will receive it with Composure and a Presence of Mind suitable to a Man of Sense.

I'll do my utmost, *says he*, upon Condition you will keep me no longer in suspence, for you terrify me with all these Preliminaries.

Well then, *says I*, it is this, as I told you before in a Heat, that I was not your lawful Wife, and that our Children were not legal Children, so I must let you know now in calmness, and in kindness, but with Affliction enough, that *I am your own Sister*, and you *my own Brother*, and that we are both the Children of our Mother now alive, and in the House, who is convinc'd of the Truth of it, in a manner not to be denied or contradicted.

I saw him turn pale, and look wild, and I said, now remember your Promise, and receive it with Presence of Mind; for who cou'd have said more to prepare you for it, than I have done? However, I call'd a Servant, and got him a little Glass of Rum, which is the usual Dram of the Country, for he was fainting away.

When he was a little recover'd, *I said to him*, this Story you may be sure requires a long Explanation, and therefore have Patience and compose your Mind to hear it out, and I'll make it as short as I can, and with this, I told him what I thought was needful of the Fact, and particularly how my Mother came to discover it to me, as above; and now, my Dear, *says I*, you will see Reason for my Capitulations, and that I neither have been the Cause of this Matter, nor could be so, and that I could know nothing of it before now.

I am fully satisfied of that, *says he*, but 'tis a dreadful Surprize to me; however, I know a Remedy for it all, and a Remedy that shall put an End to all your Difficulties, without your going to *England*. That would be strange, *said I*, as all the rest; No, no, *says he*, I'll make it easy,

there's no Body in the way of it all, but my self: He look'd a little disorder'd, when he said this, but I did not apprehend any thing from it at that time, believing, as it us'd to be said, *that they who do those things never talk of them; or that they who talk of such things never do them.*

But things were not come to their height with him, and I observ'd he became Pensive and Melancholly; and in a Word, as I thought a little Distemper'd in his Head: I endeavour'd to talk him into Temper, and into a kind of Scheme for our Government in the Affair, and sometimes he would be well, and talk with some Courage about it; but the Weight of it lay too heavy upon his Thoughts, and went so far that he made two Attempts upon himself, and in one of them had actually strangled himself, and had not his Mother come into the Room in the very Moment, he had died; but with the help of a *Negro Servant*, she cut him down and recover'd him.

Things were now come to a lamentable height: My pity for him now began to revive that Affection, which at first I really had for him, and I endeavour'd sincerely, by all the kind Carriage I could, to make up the Breach; but in short, it had gotten too great a Head, it prey'd upon his Spirits, and it threw him into a ling'ring Consumption, tho' it happen'd not to be Mortal. In this Distress I did not know what to do, as his Life was apparently declining, and I might perhaps have Marry'd again there, very much to my Advantage, had it been my Business to have staid in the Country; but my Mind was restless too, I hanker'd after coming to *England*, and nothing would satisfy me without it.

In short, by an unwearied importunity, my Husband, who was apparently decaying, as I observ'd, was at last

prevail'd with, and so *my Fate pushing me on*, the way was made clear for me, and *my Mother concurring*, I obtain'd a very good Cargo for my coming to *England*.

When I parted with my Brother, for such I am now to call him; we agreed that after I arriv'd, he should pretend to have an Account that I was dead in *England*, and so might Marry again when he wou'd; he promis'd, and engag'd to me, to Correspond with me as a Sister, and to Assist and Support me as long as I liv'd; and that if he dy'd before me, he would leave sufficient to his Mother to take Care of me still, in the Name of a Sister, and he was in some respects just to this; but it was so oddly manag'd that I felt the Disappointments very sensibly afterwards, as you shall hear in its time.

I came away in the Month of *August*, after I had been Eight Years in that Country, and now a new Scene of Misfortunes attended me, which perhaps few Women have gone thro' the like.

We had an indifferent good Voyage, till we came just upon the Coast of *England*, and where we arriv'd in two and thirty Days, but were then ruffled with two or three Storms, one of which drove us away to the Coast of *Ireland*, and we put in at *Kinsale*: We remain'd there about thirteen Days, got some Refreshment on Shore, and put to Sea again, tho' we met with very bad Weather again, in which the Ship sprung her Main-mast, *as they call'd it*: But we got at last into *Milford Haven* in *Wales*, where, tho' it was remote from our Port, yet having my Foot safe upon the firm Ground of the Isle of *Britain*, I resolv'd to venture it no more upon the Waters, which had been so terrible to me; so getting my Cloaths and Money on Shore, with my Bills of Loading and other Papers, I resolv'd to come for *London*, and leave the Ship to get to her

Port as she could; the Port whither she was bound, was to *Bristol*, where my Brother's chief Correspondent liv'd.

I got to *London* in about three Weeks, where I heard a little while after, that the Ship was arriv'd at *Bristol*, but at the same time had the Misfortune to know that by the violent Weather she had been in, and the breaking of her Main-mast, she had great Damage on Board, and that a great part of her Cargoe was spoil'd.

I had now a new Scene of Life upon my Hands, and a dreadful Appearance it had; I was come away with a kind of final Farewel; what I brought with me, was indeed considerable, had it come safe, and by the help of it, I might have married again tollerably well; but as it was, I was reduc'd to between two or three hundred Pounds in the whole, and this without any hope of Recruit. I was entirely without Friends, nay, even so much as without Acquaintances, for I found it was absolutely necessary not to revive former Acquaintance; and as for my subtle Friend that set me up formerly for a Fortune, she was dead and her Husband also.

The looking after my Cargoe of Goods soon after obliged me to take a Journey to *Bristol*, and during my Attendance upon that Affair, I took the Diversion of going to the *Bath*, for as I was still far from being old, so my Humour, which was always Gay, continu'd so to an Extream; and being now, *as it were*, a Woman of Fortune, tho' I was a Woman without a Fortune, I expected something or other might happen in the way, that might mend my Circumstances, as had been my Case before.

The *Bath* is a Place of Gallantry enough; Expensive, and full of Snares; I went thither indeed in the View of taking what might offer; but I must do my self Justice, as to protest I meant nothing but in an honest way, nor had

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any Thoughts about me at first that look'd the way, which
afterwards I suffered them to be guided.

Here I stay'd the whole latter Season, *as it is call'd there*, and contracted some unhappy Acquaintance, which rather prompted the Follies I fell afterwards into, than fortify'd me against them: I liv'd pleasantly enough, kept good Company, *that is to say*, gay fine Company; but had the Discouragement to find this way of Living sunk me exceedingly, and that as I had no settled Income, so spending upon the main Stock, was but a certain kind of *bleeding to Death*; and this gave me many sad Reflections: However I shook them off, and still flatter'd my self that something or other might offer for my Advantage.

But I was in the wrong Place for it; I was not now at *Redriff*, where if I had set my self tollerably up, some honest Sea Captain or other might have talk'd with me upon the honourable Terms of Matrimony; but I was at the *Bath*, where Men find a Mistress sometimes, but very rarely look for a Wife; and Consequently all the Particular Acquaintances a Woman can expect there, must have some Tendency that way.

I had spent the first Season well enough, for tho' I had contracted some Acquaintance with a Gentleman, who came to the *Bath* for his Diversion, yet I had enter'd into no *felonious Treaty*: I had resisted some Casual Offers of Gallantry, and had manag'd that way well enough; I was not wicked enough to come into the Crime for the meer Vice of it, and I had no extraordinary Offers that tempted me with the main thing which I wanted.

However, I went this length the first Season, (*viz.*) I contracted an Acquaintance with a Woman in whose House I lodg'd, who, tho' she did not keep an ill House, yet had none of the best Principles in her self: I had on all

Occasions behav'd my self so well as not to get the least Slur upon my Reputation, and all the Men that I had convers'd with, were of so good Reputation that I had not gotten the least Reflection, by conversing with them; nor did any of them seem to think there was room for a wicked Correspondence, if they had offered it; yet there was one Gentleman, *as above*, who always singled me out for the Diversion of my Company, as he call'd it, which, *as he was pleased to say*, was very agreeable to him, but at that time there was no more in it.

I had many Melancholly Hours at the *Bath* after all the Company was gone, for tho' I went to *Bristol* sometimes for the disposing my Effects, and for Recruits of Money, yet I chose to come back to the *Bath* for my Residence, because being on good Terms with the Woman, in whose House I lodg'd in the Summer, I found that during the Winter I liv'd rather cheaper there than I could do any where else; here, *I say*, I pass'd the Winter as heavily as I had pass'd the Autumn chearfully; but having contracted a nearer Intimacy with the said Woman, in whose House I lodg'd, I could not avoid communicating something of what lay hardest upon my Mind, and particularly the narrowness of my Circumstances: I told her also, that I had a Mother and a Brother in *Virginia* in good Circumstances, and as I had really written back to my Mother in particular to represent my Condition, and the great Loss I had receiv'd, so I did not fail to let my new Friend know, that I expected a Supply from thence, and so indeed I did; and as the Ships went from *Bristol* to *York-River*, in *Virginia*, and back again generally in less time than from *London*, and that my Brother corresponded chiefly at *Bristol*, I thought it was much better for me to wait here for my Returns, than to go to *London*.

My new Friend appear'd sensibly affected with my Condition, and indeed was so very kind, as to reduce the rate of my living with her to so low a Price during the Winter, that she convinc'd me she got nothing by me; and as for Lodging, during the Winter, I paid nothing at all.

When the Spring Season came on, she continu'd to be as kind to me as she could, and I lodg'd with her for a time, till it was found necessary to do otherwise; she had some Persons of Character that frequently lodg'd in her House, and in particular the Gentleman, who, as I said, singled me out for his Companion in the Winter before; and he came down again with another Gentleman in his Company and two Servants, and lodg'd in the same House: I suspected that my Landlady had invited him thither, letting him know that I was still with her, but she deny'd it.

In a Word, this Gentleman came down and continu'd to single me out for his peculiar Confidence; he was a compleat Gentleman, *that must be confess'd*, and his Company was agreeable to me, as mine, *if I might believe him*, was to him; he made no Professions to me, but of an extraordinary Respect, and he had such an Opinion of my Virtue, that, as *he often profess'd*, he believ'd, if he should offer any thing else, I should reject him with Contempt; he soon understood from me that I was a Widow, that I had arriv'd at *Bristol* from *Virginia* by the last Ships; and that I waited at the *Bath* till the next *Virginia Fleet* should arrive, by which I expected considerable Effects; I understood by him, that he had a Wife, but that the Lady was distemper'd in her Head, and was under the Conduct of her own Relations, which he consented to, to avoid any Reflection that might be cast upon him for mismanaging

her Cure; and in the mean time he came to the *Bath* to divert his Thoughts under such a melancholly Circumstance.

My Landlady, who of her own accord encourag'd the Correspondence on all Occasions, gave me an advantageous Character of him, as a Man of Honour and of Virtue, as well as of a great Estate; and indeed I had Reason to say so of him too, for tho' we lodg'd both on a Floor, and he had frequently come into my Chamber, even when I was in Bed, and I also into his, yet he never offered any thing to me farther than a Kiss, or so much as sollicited me to any thing till long after, as you shall hear.

I frequently took Notice to my Landlady of his exceeding Modesty, and she again used to tell me, she believ'd it was so from the Beginning; however she used to tell me that she thought I ought to expect some Gratifications from him for my Company, for indeed he did as it were engross me. *I told her*, I had not given him the least Occasion to think I wanted it, or that I would accept of it from him; *She told me*, she would take that part upon her, and she manag'd it so dextrously, that the first time we were together alone, after she had talk'd with him, he began to enquire a little into my Circumstances, as how I had subsisted my self since I came on shore, and whether I did not want Money? I stood off very boldly, I told him that tho' my Cargoe of Tobacco was damag'd, yet that it was not quite lost: that the Merchant that I had been consigned to, had so honestly managed for me that I had not wanted, and that I hop'd, with frugal Management, I should make it hold out till more would come, which I expected by the next Fleet; that in the mean time I had retrench'd my Expences, and whereas I kept a Maid last Season, now I liv'd without; and whereas I had a Chamber and a Dining

Room then on the first Floor, I now had but one Room two Pair of Stairs, *and the like*; but I live, *said I*, as well satisfy'd now as then; *adding*, that his Company had made me live much more chearfully than otherwise I should have done, for which I was much oblig'd to him; and so I put off all room for any Offer at the present: It was not long before he attack'd me again, and told me he found that I was backward to trust him with the Secret of my Circumstances, *which he was sorry for*; assuring me that he enquir'd into it with no design to satisfy his own Curiosity, but meerly to assist me if there was any Occasion; but since I would not own my self to stand in need of any Assistance, he had but one thing more to desire of me, and that was, that I would promise him that when I was any way streighten'd, I would frankly tell him of it, and that I would make use of him with the same Freedom that he made the Offer; *adding*, that I should always find I had a true Friend, tho' perhaps I was afraid to trust him.

I omitted nothing *that was fit to be said by one infinitely oblig'd*, to let him know, that I had a due Sense of his Kindness; and indeed from that time, I did not appear so much reserv'd to him as I had done before, tho' still within the Bounds of the strictest Virtue on both sides; but how free soever our Conversation was, I could not arrive to that Freedom which he desir'd, *viz.* to tell him I wanted Money, tho' I was secretly very glad of his Offer.

Some Weeks pass'd after this, and still I never ask'd him for Money; when my Landlady, a cunning Creature, who had often press'd me to it, but found that I could not do it, makes a Story of her own inventing, and comes in bluntly to me when we were together, *O! Widow*, says she, *I have bad News to tell you this Morning*: What is that, *said I*, is the *Virginia Ships* taken by the *French*? for that

was my Fear. No, no, *says she*, but the Man you sent to Bristol Yesterday for Money is come back, and *says he has brought none.*

I could by no Means like her Project; I thought it look'd too much like prompting him, which he did not want, and I saw that I should lose nothing by being backward, so took her up short; I can't imagine why he should say so, *said I*, for I assure you he brought me all the Money I sent him for, and here it is, *said I* (pulling out my Purse with about 12 Guineas in it) and added, I intend you shall have most of it by and by.

He seem'd distasted a little at her talking as she did, as well as I, taking it as I fancy'd he would, as something forward of her; but when he saw me give such an Answer, he came immediately to himself: The next Morning we talk'd of it again, when I found he was fully satisfied; and smiling said, *be hop'd I would not want Money, and not tell him of it, and that I had promis'd him otherwise*: I told him I had been very much dissatisfied at my Landlady's talking so publickly the Day before of what she had nothing to do with; but I suppos'd she wanted what I ow'd her, which was about Eight Guineas, which I had resolv'd to give her, and had given it her the same Night.

He was in a mighty good Humour, when he heard me say, *I had paid her*, and it went off into some other Discourse at that time; but the next Morning he having heard me up before him, he call'd to me, *and I answer'd*; he ask'd me to come into his Chamber; he was in Bed when I came in, and he made me come and sit down on his Bed side, for he said he had something to say to me. After some very kind Expressions, he ask'd me, if I would be very honest to him, and give a sincere Answer to one thing he would desire of me: After some little Cavil with

him at the word *Sincere*, and asking him if I had ever given him any Answers which were not *Sincere*, I promis'd him I would; why then his Request was, *he said*, to let him see my Purse; I immediately put my Hand into my Pocket, and *laughing at him*, pull'd it out, and there was in it three Guineas and a Half; *then he ask'd me*, if there was all the Money I had? I told him no, *laughing again*, not by a great deal.

Well then, *he said*, he would have me promise to go and fetch him all the Money I had, every Farthing: *I told him I would*, and I went into my Chamber, and fetch'd him a little private Drawer, where I had about six Guineas more, and some Silver, and threw it all down upon the Bed, and told him there was all my Wealth, honestly to a Shilling: He look'd a little at it, but did not tell it, and huddled it all into the Drawer again, and then reaching his Pocket, pull'd out a Key, and bad me open a little Walnut-tree Box he had upon the Table, and bring him such a Drawer, which I did: in this Drawer, there was a great deal of Money in Gold, I believe near 200 Guineas, but I knew not how much: He took the Drawer, and taking me by the Hand, made me put it in, and take a whole Handful; I was backward at that, but he held my Hand hard in his Hand, and put it into the Drawer, and made me take out as many Guineas almost as I could well take up at once.

When I had done so, he made me put them into my Lap, and took my little Drawer, and pour'd out all my own Money among his, and bad me get me gone, and carry it all into my own Chamber.

I relate this Story the more particularly, because of the good Humour of it, and to show the Temper with which we convers'd: It was not long after this, but he began every Day to find Fault with my Cloaths, with my Laces,

and Head-dresses; and in a Word, press'd me to buy better, which by the way I was willing enough to do, tho' I did not seem to be so; I lov'd nothing in the World better than fine Cloaths, but I told him I must Housewife the Money he had lent me, or else I should not be able to pay him again. He then told me in a few Words, that as he had a sincere Respect for me, and knew my Circumstances, he had not lent me that Money, but given it me, and that he thought I had merited it from him, by giving him my Company so intirely as I had done: After this, he made me take a Maid, and keep House, and his Friend being gone, he obliged me to dyet him, which I did very willingly, believing, *as it appear'd*, that I should lose nothing by it, nor did the Woman of the House fail to find her Account in it too.

We had liv'd thus near three Months, when the Company beginning to wear away at the *Bath*, he talk'd of going away, and fain he would have me to go to *London* with him: I was not very easy in that Proposal, not knowing what Posture I was to live in there, or how he might use me: But while this was in Debate, he fell very Sick; he had gone out to a Place in *Somersetshire*, call'd *Shepton*, and was there taken very ill, and so ill that he could not Travel, so he sent his Man back to the *Bath*, to beg me that I would hire a Coach and come over to him: Before he went, he had left his Money and other things of Value with me, and what to do with them I did not know, but I secur'd them as well as I could, and lock'd up the Lodgings and went to him, where I found him very ill indeed, so I perswaded him to be carry'd in a Litter to *Bath*, where was more Help and better Advice to be had.

He consented, and I brought him to the *Bath*, which was about fifteen Miles, *as I remember*: here he continued

very ill of a Fever, and kept his Bed five Weeks, all which time I nurs'd him and tended him as carefully as if I had been his Wife; indeed if I had been his Wife I could not have done more; I sat up with him so much and so often, that at last, indeed he would not let me sit up any longer, and then I got a Pallet Bed into his Room, and lay in it just at his Bed's Feet.

I was indeed sensibly affected with his Condition, and with the Apprehensions of losing such a Friend as he was, and was like to be to me, and I us'd to sit and cry by him many Hours together: At last he grew better, and gave hopes that he would recover, as indeed he did, tho' very slowly.

Were it otherwise than what I am going to say, I should not be backward to disclose it, as it is apparent I have done in other Cases; but I affirm, through all this Conversation, abating the coming into the Chamber when I or he was in Bed, and the necessary Offices of attending him Night and Day, when he was Sick, there had not pass'd the least immodest Word or Action between us. O! that it had been so to the last.

After some time he gathered Strength and grew well apace, and I would have remov'd my Pallet Bed, but he would not let me, till he was able to venture himself without any Body to sit up with him, when I remov'd to my own Chamber.

He took many Occasions to express his Sense of my Tenderness for him; and when he grew well he made me a Present of fifty Guineas for my Care, and, as he call'd it, hazarding my Life to save his.

And now he made deep Protestations of a sincere inviolable Affection for me, but with the utmost reserve for my Virtue, and his own: I told him I was fully satisfy'd of it;

he carried it that length that he protested to me, that if he was naked in Bed with me, he would as sacredly preserve my Virtue, as he would defend it, if I was assaulted by a Ravisher; I believ'd him, and told him I did so; but this did not satisfy him, he would, *be said*, wait for some Opportunity to give me an undoubted Testimony of it.

It was a great while after this that I had Occasion, on my Business, to go to *Bristol*, upon which he hir'd me a Coach, and would go with me; and now indeed our Intimacy increas'd: From *Bristol* he carry'd me to *Gloucester*, which was meerly a Journey of Pleasure to take the Air; and here it was our hap to have no Lodgings in the Inn, but in one large Chamber with two Beds in it: The Master of the House going with us to show his Rooms, and coming into that Room, said very frankly to him, Sir, *It is none of my Business to enquire whether the Lady be your Spouse or no*, but if not, *you may lye as honestly in these two Beds, as if you were in two Chambers*, and with that he pulls a great Curtain which drew quite cross the Room, and effectually divided the Beds; well, *says my Friend, very readily*, these Beds will do, and as for the rest, we are too near a Kin to lye together, tho' we may lodge near one another; and this put an honest Face on the thing too. When we came to go to Bed, he decently went out of the Room till I was in Bed, and then went to Bed in the other Bed, but lay there talking to me a great while.

At last, repeating his usual saying, that he could lye naked in the Bed with me, and not offer me the least Injury, he starts out of his Bed, and now my *Dear*, says he, *you shall see how just I will be to you, and that I can keep my Word*, and away he comes to my Bed.

I resisted a little, but I must confess I should not have resisted him much, if he had not made those Promises at

all; so after a little struggle, I lay still and let him come to Bed; when he was there he took me in his Arms, and so I lay all Night with him, but he had no more to do with me, or offer'd anything to me, other than embracing me, as I say, in his Arms, no not the whole Night, but rose up and dress'd him in the Morning, and left me as innocent for him as I was the Day I was born.

This was a surprising thing to me, and perhaps may be so to others, who know how the Laws of Nature Work; for he was a vigorous brisk Person; nor did he act thus on a Principle of Religion at all, *but of meer Affection*; insisting on it, that tho' I was to him the most agreeable Woman in the World, yet because he lov'd me he could not injure me.

Own it was a noble Principle, but as it was what I never saw before, so it was perfectly amazing. We travell'd the rest of the Journey as we did before, and came back to the *Bath*, where, as he had Opportunity to come to me when he would, he often repeated the same Moderation, and I frequently lay with him, and altho' all the Familiarities of Man and Wife were common to us, yet he never once offered to go any farther, and he valu'd himself much upon it; I do not say, that I was so wholly pleas'd with it as he thought I was; for I own I was much wickeder than he.

We liv'd thus near Two Years, only with this Exception, that he went three times to *London* in that time, and once he continu'd there four Months, but to do him Justice, he always supply'd me with Money to subsist on very Handsomely.

Had we continu'd thus, I confess we had had much to boast of; but as wise Men say, it is ill venturing too near the brink of a Command, so we found it; and here again I

must do him the Justice to own that the first Breach was not on his Part: It was one Night that we were in Bed together warm and merry, and having drank, I think, a little more both of us, than usual, tho' not in the least to disorder us, when after some other Follies which I cannot Name, and being clasp'd close in his Arms, *I told him, (I repeat it with shame and horror of soul)* that I could find in my Heart to discharge him of his Engagement for one Night and no more.

He took me at my Word immediately, and after that, there was no resisting him; neither indeed had I any mind to resist him any more.

Thus the Government of our Virtue was broken, and I exchang'd the Place of Friend, for that unmusical harsh sounding Title of Whore. In the Morning we were both at our Penitentials, I cried very heartily, he express'd himself very sorry; but that was all either of us could do at that time, and the way being thus clear'd, and the Bars of Virtue and Conscience thus remov'd, we had the less to struggle with.

It was but a dull kind of Conversation that we had together for all the rest of that Week, I look'd on him with Blushes; and every now and then started that melancholly Objection, *What if I should be with Child now? What will become of me then?* He encouraged me by telling me, that as long as I was true to him, he would be so to me; and since it was gone such a length (which indeed he never intended), yet if I was with Child, he would take care of that and me too: This harden'd us both; I assured him if I was with Child, I would die for want of a Midwife rather than name him as the Father of it; and he assured me, I should never want if I should be with Child: These mutual Assurances harden'd us in the thing, and after

this we repeated the Crime as often as we pleased, till at length, as I fear'd, so it came to pass, and I was indeed with Child.

After I was sure it was so, and I had satisfied him of it too, we began to think of taking Measures for the managing it, and I propos'd trusting the Secret to my Landlady, and asking her Advice, which he agreed to: My Landlady, a Woman (as I found) us'd to such things, made light of it; she said, she knew it would come to that at last, and made us very merry about it: As I said above, we found her an experienced old Lady at such Work; she undertook everything, engag'd to procure a Midwife and a Nurse, to satisfy all Enquiries, and bring us off with Reputation, and she did so very dexterously indeed.

When I grew near my time, she desir'd my Gentleman to go away to *London*, or make as if he did so; when he was gone, she acquainted the Parish Officers that there was a Lady ready to lye in at her House, but that she knew her Husband very well, and gave them, as she pretended, an account of his Name, which she call'd *Sir Walter Cleave*; telling them, he was a worthy Gentleman, and that he would answer for all Enquiries, and the like: This satisfied the Parish Officers presently, and I lay Inn in as much Credit as I could have done if I had really been my Lady *Cleave*; and was assisted in my Travail by three or four of the best Citizens Wives of *Bath*, which however made me a little the more Expensive to him; I often expressed my concern to him about that part, but he bid me not be concerned at it.

As he had furnish'd me very sufficiently with Money for the extraordinary Expences of my lying Inn, I had everything very handsome about me; but did not affect to be so Gay or Extravagant neither; besides, knowing the

World, as I had done, and that such kind of things do not often last long, I took care to lay up as much Money as I could for a wet Day, as I call'd it; making him believe it was all spent upon the extraordinary Appearance of things in my lying Inn.

By this Means, with what he had given me as above, I had at the end of my lying Inn 200 Guineas by me, including also what was left of my own.

I was brought to Bed of a fine Boy indeed, and a charming Child it was; and when he heard of it, he wrote me a very kind obliging Letter about it, and then told me, he thought it would look better for me to come away for *London* as soon as I was up and well, that he had provided Apartments for me at *Hamersmith*, as if I came only from *London*, and that after a while I should go back to the *Bath*, and he would go with me.

I lik'd his Offer very well, and hir'd a Coach on purpose, and taking my Child, and a Wet-Nurse to tend and suckle it, and a Maid Servant with me, away I went for *London*.

He met me at *Reading* in his own Charriot, and taking me into that, left the Servant and the Child in the hir'd Coach, and so he brought me to my new Lodgings at *Hamersmith*; with which I had abundance of Reason to be very well pleas'd, for they were very handsome Rooms.

And now I was indeed in the height of what I might call Prosperity, and I wanted nothing but to be a Wife, which however could not be in this Case, and therefore on all Occasions I studied to save what I could, as I said above, against the time of Scarcity; knowing well enough that such things as these do not always continue, that Men that keep Mistresses often change them, grow weary of them, or Jealous of them, or something or other; and

sometimes the Ladies that are thus well us'd, are not careful by a prudent Conduct to preserve the Esteem of their Persons, or the nice Article of their Fidelity, and then they are justly cast off with Contempt.

But I was secur'd in this Point, for as I had no Inclination to change, so I had no manner of Acquaintance, so no Temptation to look any farther; I kept no Company but in the Family where I lodg'd, and with a Clergyman's Lady at next Door; so that when he was absent I visited no Body, nor did he ever find me out of my Chamber or Parlour whenever he came down; if I went any where to take the Air it was always with him.

The living in this manner with him, and his with me, was certainly the most undesigned thing in the World; he often protested to me that when he became first acquainted with me, and even to the very Night when we first broke in upon our Rules, he never had the least Design of lying with me; that he always had a sincere Affection for me, but not the least real Inclination to do what he had done; I assured him I never suspected him, that if I had, I should not so easily have yielded to the Freedoms which brought it on, but [that it] was all a Surprize, and was owing to our having yielded too far to our mutual Inclinations that Night; and indeed I have often observ'd since, and leave it as a Caution to the Readers of this Story, that we ought to be cautious of gratifying our Inclinations in loose and lew'd Freedoms, lest we find our Resolutions of Virtue fail us in the Juncture when their Assistance should be most necessary.

It is true that from the first Hour I began to converse with him, I resolv'd to let him lye with me, if he offered it; but it was because I wanted his Help, and knew of no other way of securing him: But when we were that Night

together, and, as I have said, had gone such a length, I found my Weakness, the Inclination was not to be resisted, but I was obliged to yield up all even before he ask'd it.

However, he was so just to me that he never upbraided me with that; nor did he ever express the least dislike of my Conduct on any other Occasion, but always protested he was as much delighted with my Company as he was the first Hour we came together.

It is true that he had no Wife, *that is to say*, she was no Wife to him, but the Reflections of Conscience oftentimes snatch a Man, especially a Man of Sense, from the Arms of a Mistress, as it did him at last, tho' on another Occasion.

On the other hand, tho' I was not without secret Reproaches of my own Conscience for the Life I led, and that even in the greatest height of the Satisfaction I ever took, yet I had the terrible prospect of Poverty and Starving, which lay on me as a frightful Spectre, so that there was no looking behind me: But as Poverty brought me into it, so fear of Poverty kept me in it, and I frequently resolv'd to leave it quite off, if I could but come to lay up Money enough to maintain me; But these were Thoughts of no weight, and whenever he came to me they vanish'd; for his Company was so Delightful, that there was no being Melancholly when he was there, the Reflections were all the Subject of those Hours when I was alone.

I liv'd six Years in this happy, but unhappy Condition, in which time I brought him three Children, but only the first of them liv'd; and tho' I remov'd twice in that Six Years, yet I came back the Sixth Year to my first Lodgings at *Hamersmith*: Here it was that I was one Morning surpris'd with a kind but melancholly Letter from my

Gentleman; intimating, that he was very ill, and was afraid he should have another Fit of Sickness, but that his Wife's Relations being in the House with him, it would not be practicable to have me with him, which however he express'd his great Dissatisfaction in, and that he wish'd I could be allow'd to tend and Nurse him as I did before.

I was very much concern'd at this Account, and was very impatient to know how it was with him; I waited a Fortnight or thereabouts, and heard nothing, which surpriz'd me, and I began to be very uneasy indeed; I think, I may say, that for the next Fortnight I was near to distracted: It was my particular Difficulty, that I did not know directly where he was; for I understood at first he was in the Lodgings of his Wife's Mother; but having remov'd my self to *London*, I soon found, by the help of the Direction I had for writing my Letters to him, how to enquire after him, and there I found that he was at a House in *Bloomsbury*, whither he had remov'd his whole Family; and that his Wife, and Wife's Mother, were in the same House, tho' the Wife was not suffer'd to know that she was in the same House with her Husband.

Here I also soon understood that he was at the last Extremity, which made me almost at the last Extremity too, to have a true Account: One Night I had the Curiosity to disguise my self like a Servant Maid in a round Cap and Straw Hat, and went to the Door, as sent by a Lady of his Neighbourhood, where he liv'd before, and giving Master and Mistress's Service, I said I was sent to know how Mr. _____ did, and how he had rested that Night; in delivering this Message I got the Opportunity I desir'd, for speaking with one of the Maids, I held a long Gossips Tale with her, and had all the Particulars of his Illness,

which I found was a Pluresy, attended with a Cough and Fever; she told me also who was in the House, and how his Wife was, who, by her Relation, they were in some hopes might recover her Understanding; but as to the Gentleman himself, the Doctors said there was very little hopes of him, that in the Morning they thought he had been dying, and that he was but little better then, for they did not expect that he could live over the next Night.

This was heavy News for me, and I began now to see an end of my Prosperity, and to see that it was well I had plaid the good Housewife, and sav'd something while he was alive, for now I had no view of *my own Living* before me.

It lay very heavy upon my Mind too, that I had a Son, a fine lovely Boy, about five Years old, and no Provision made for it, at least that I knew of; with these Considerations, and a sad Heart, I went home that Evening, and began to cast with my self how I should live, and in what manner to bestow my self, for the residue of my Life.

You may be sure I could not rest without enquiring again very quickly what was become of him; and not venturing to go my self, I sent several sham Messengers, till after a Fortnights waiting longer, I found that there was hopes of his Life, tho' he was still very ill; then I abated my sending to the House, and in some time after I learnt in the Neighbourhood that he was about House, and then that he was Abroad again.

I made no doubt then but that I should soon hear of him, and began to comfort my self with my Circumstances, being, as I thought, recovered; I waited a Week, and two Weeks, and with much surprize near two Months and heard nothing, but that being recovered he was gone into the Country for the Air, after his Distemper; after

this it was yet two Months more, and then I understood he was come to his City-House again, but still I heard nothing from him.

I had written several Letters for him, and directed them as usual, and found two or three of them had been call'd for, *but not the rest*: I wrote again in a more pressing manner than ever, and in one of them let him know, that I must be forc'd to wait on him my self, representing my Circumstances, the Rent of Lodgings to pay, and the Provision for the Child wanting, and my own deplorable Condition, destitute of Subsistance after his most solemn Engagement, to take Care of, and provide for me; I took a Copy of this Letter, and finding it lay at the House, near a Month, and was not call'd for, I found Means to have the Copy of it put into his Hands at a Coffee-House, where I found he had us'd to go.

This Letter forc'd an Answer from him, by which, tho' I found I was to be abandon'd, yet I found he had sent a Letter to me some time before, desiring me to go down to the *Bath* again; its Contents I shall come to presently.

It is true that Sick Beds are the times, when such Correspondences as this are look'd on with different Countenances, and seen with other Eyes, than we saw them with before: My Lover had been at the Gates of Death, and at the very brink of Eternity; and it seems struck with a due Remorse, and with sad Reflections upon his past Life of Gallantry and Levity; and among the rest, his criminal Correspondence with me, which was indeed neither more or less than a long continu'd Life of Adultery, had represented itself as it really was, not as it had been formerly thought by him to be, and he look'd upon it now with a just Abhorence.

I cannot but observe also, and leave it for the Direction of my Sex in such Cases of Pleasure, that whenever sincere Repentance succeeds such a Crime as this, there never fails to attend a Hatred of the Object; and the more the Affection might seem to be before, the Hatred will be more in Proportion: It will always be so, indeed it cannot be otherwise; for there cannot be a true and sincere Abhorence of the Offence, and the Love to the Cause of it remain; there will with an Abhorence of the Sin be found a Detestation of the fellow Sinner; you can expect no other.

I found it so here, tho' good Manners, and Justice in this Gentleman, kept him from carrying it on to any Extream; but the short History of his Part in this Affair was thus; he perceived by my last Letter, and by the rest, which he went for after, that I was not gone to the *Bath*, and that his first Letter had not come to my Hand, upon which he writes me this following:

MADAM,

I AM surpris'd that my Letter dated the 8th of last Month, did not come to your Hand; I give you my Word it was deliver'd at your Lodgings, and to the Hands of your Maid.

I need not acquaint you with what has been my Condition for some time past; and how having been at the Edge of the Grave, I am by the unexpected and undeserved Mercy of Heaven restor'd again: In the Condition I have been in, it cannot be strange to you that our unhappy Correspondence has not been the least of the Burthens which lay upon my Conscience; I need say no more, those things that must be repented of, must be also reform'd.

I wish you would think of going back to the Bath; I enclose you here a Bill for 50l. for clearing your self at your Lodgings,

130 *The FORTUNES & MISFORTUNES of
and carrying you down, and hope it will be no Surprize to you
to add, that on this Account only, and not for any Offence given
me on your side, I can SEE YOU NO MORE; I will
take due care of the Child, leave him where he is, or take him
with you, as you please; I wish you the like Reflections, and
that they may be to your Advantage; I am, &c.*

I was struck with this Letter, as with a thousand Wounds, the Reproaches of my own Conscience were such as I cannot express, for I was not blind to my own Crime; and I reflected that I might with less Offence have continued with my Brother, since there was no Crime in our Marriage on that Score, neither of us knowing it.

But I never once reflected that I was all this while a marry'd Woman, a Wife to Mr. — the Linnen-Draper, who tho' he had left me by the Necessity of his Circumstances, had no Power to discharge me from the Marriage Contract which was between us, or to give me a legal liberty to marry again; so that I had been no less than a Whore and an Adulteress all this while: I then reproach'd my self with the Liberties I had taken, and how I had been a Snare to this Gentleman, and that indeed I was principal in the Crime; that now he was mercifully snatch'd out of the Gulph by a convincing Work upon his Mind, but that I was left as if I was abandon'd by Heaven to a continuing in my Wickedness.

Under these Reflections I continu'd very pensive and sad for near a Month, and did not go down to the *Bath*, having no Inclination to be with the Woman who I was with before, least, as I thought, she should prompt me to some wicked Course of Life again, as she had done; and besides, I was loth she should know I was cast off as above.

And now I was greatly perplex'd about my little Boy;

it was Death to me to part with the Child, and yet when I consider'd the Danger of being one time or other left with him to keep without being able to support him, I then resolv'd to leave him; but then I concluded to be near him my self too, that I might have the Satisfaction of seeing him, without the Care of providing for him. So I sent my Gentleman a short Letter that I had obey'd his Orders in all things, but that of going back to the *Bath*, that however parting from him was a Wound to me that I could never recover, yet that I was fully satisfied his Reflections were just, and would be very far from desiring to obstruct his Reformation.

Then I represented my own Circumstances to him in the most moving Terms: I told him that those unhappy Distresses which first mov'd him to a generous Friendship for me, would, I hope, move him to a little Concern for me now; tho' the Criminal part of our Correspondence, which I believd neither of us intended to fall into at that time, was broken off; that I desir'd to repent as sincerely as he had done, but intreated him to put me in some Condition, that I might not be expos'd to Temptations from the frightful prospect of Poverty and Distress; and if he had the least Apprehensions of my being troublesome to him, I beg'd he would put me in a Posture to go back to my Mother in *Virginia*, from whence he knew I came, and that would put an end to all his Fears on that account; I concluded, that if he would send me 50*l.* more to facilitate my going away, I would send him back a general Release, and would promise never to disturb him more with any Importunities; unless it were to hear of the well-doing of the Child, who, if I found my Mother living, and my Circumstances able, I would send for and take him also off of his Hands.

This was indeed all a Cheat thus far, *viz.* that I had no intention to go to *Virginia*, as the Account of my former Affairs there may convince any Body of; but the Business was to get this last Fifty Pounds of him, if possible, knowing well enough it would be the last Penny I was ever to expect.

However, the Argument I us'd, namely, of giving him a general Release, and never troubling him any more, prevail'd effectually, and he sent me a Bill for the Money by a Person who brought with him a general Release for me to sign, and which I frankly sign'd; and thus, tho' full sore against my will, a final End was put to this Affair.

And here I cannot but reflect upon the unhappy Consequence of too great Freedoms between Persons stated as we were, upon the pretence of innocent Intentions, Love of Friendship, *and the like*; for the Flesh has generally so great a share in those Friendships, that it is great odds, but Inclination prevails at last over the most solemn Resolutions; and that Vice breaks in at the Breaches of Decency, which really innocent Friendship ought to preserve with the greatest strictness; but I leave the Readers of these things to their own just Reflections, which they will be more able to make effectual than I, who so soon forgot my self, and am therefore but a very indifferent Monitor.

I was now a single Person again, *as I may call my self*; I was loos'd from all the Obligations either of Wedlock or Mistressship in the World; except my Husband the Linnen Draper, who I having not now heard from in almost Fifteen Years, no Body could blame me for thinking my self entirely freed from; seeing also he had at his going away told me, that if I did not hear frequently from him,

I should conclude he was dead, and I might freely marry again to whom I pleas'd.

I now began to cast up my Accounts; I had by many Letters, and much Importunity, and with the Intercession of my Mother too, had a second return of some Goods from my Brother, *as I now call him*, in *Virginia*, to make up the Damage of the Cargo I brought away with me, and this too was upon the Condition of my sealing a general Release to him, which though I thought hard, but yet I was oblig'd to promise. I manag'd so well in this case, that I got my Goods away before the Release was sign'd, and then I always found something or other to say to evade the thing, and to put off the signing it at all; till *at length* I pretended I must write to my Brother, before I could do it.

Including this Recruit, and before I got the last 50*l.* I found my strength to amount, put all together, to about 400*l.* so that with that I had above 450*l.* I had sav'd 100*l.* more, but I met with a Disaster with that, which was this; that a Goldsmith in whose Hands I had trusted it, broke, so I lost 70*l.* of my Money, the Man's Composition not making above 30*l.* out of his 100*l.* I had a little Plate, but not much, and was well enough stock'd with Cloaths and Linnen.

With this Stock I had the World to begin again; but you are to consider, that I was not now the same Woman as when I liv'd at *Rotherhithe*; for first of all I was near 20 Years older, and did not look the better for my Age, nor for my Rambles to *Virginia* and back again; and tho' I omitted nothing that might set me out to Advantage, except Painting, for that I never stoop'd to, yet there would always be some difference seen between Five and Twenty and Two and Forty.

I cast about innumerable ways for my future State of Life, and began to consider very seriously what I should do, *but nothing offer'd*; I took care to make the World take me for something more than I was, and had it given out that I was a Fortune, and that my Estate was in my own Hands, the last of which was very true, the first of it was as above: I had no Acquaintance, which was one of my worst Misfortunes, and the Consequence of that was, I had no Adviser, and above all, I had no Body to whom I could in confidence commit the Secret of my Circumstances to; and I found by Experience, that to be Friendless is the worst Condition, next to being in want, that a Woman can be reduc'd to: *I say a Woman*, because 'tis evident Men can be their own Advisers, and their own Directors, and know how to work themselves out of Difficulties and into Business better than Women; but if a Woman has no Friend to Communicate her Affairs to, and to advise and assist her, 'tis ten to one but she is undone; nay, and the more Money she has, the more Danger she is in of being wrong'd and deceiv'd; and this was my Case in the Affair of the Hundred Pound which I left in the Hand of the Goldsmith, *as above*, whose Credit, it seems, was upon the Ebb before, but I that had no Body to consult with, knew nothing of it, and so lost my Money.

When a Woman is thus left desolate and void of Council, she is just like a Bag of Money, or a Jewel dropt on the Highway, which is a Prey to the next Comer; if a Man of Virtue and upright Principles happens to find it, he will have it cried, and the Owner may come to hear of it again; but how many times shall such a thing fall into Hands that will make no scruple of seizing it for their own, to once that it shall come into good Hands.

This was evidently my Case, for I was now a loose un-

guided Creature, and had no Help, no Assistance, no Guide for my Conduct. I knew what I aim'd at, and what I wanted, but knew nothing how to pursue the End by direct means; I wanted to be plac'd in a settled State of Living, and had I happen'd to meet with a sober good Husband, I should have been as true a Wife to him as Virtue it self could have form'd: If I had been otherwise, the Vice came in always at the Door of Necessity, not at the Door of Inclination; and I understood too well, by the want of it, what the Value of a settl'd Life was, to do any thing to forfeit the felicity of it; nay, I should have made the better Wife for all the Difficulties I had pass'd thro', by a great deal; nor did I in any of the Times that I had been a Wife, give my Husbands the least uneasiness on account of my Behaviour.

But all this was nothing; I found no encouraging Prospect; I waited, I liv'd regularly, and with as much frugality as became my Circumstances, but nothing offer'd; nothing presented, and the main Stock wasted apace; what to do I knew not, the Terror of approaching Poverty lay hard upon my Spirits: I had some Money, but where to place it I knew not, nor would the Interest of it maintain me, at least not in *London*.

At length a new Scene opened: There was in the House, where I lodg'd, a North Country Gentlewoman, and nothing was more frequent in her Discourse, than her account of the cheapness of Provisions, and the easy way of living in her Country; how plentiful and how cheape every-thing was, what good Company they kept, and the like; till at last I told her she almost tempted me to go and live in her Country; for I that was a Widow, tho' I had sufficient to live on, yet had no way of increasing it, and that *London* was an extravagant Place; that I found I could

not live here under One Hundred Pound a Year, unless I kept no Company, no Servant, made no Appearance, and buried my self in Privacy, as if I was oblig'd to it by Necessity.

I should have observ'd, that she was always made to believe, as every Body else was, that I was a great Fortune, or at least that I had Three or Four Thousand Pounds, if not more, and all in my own Hands; and she was mighty sweet upon me when she thought me inclin'd in the least to go into her Country; she said she had a sister liv'd near *Liverpool*, that her Brother was a considerable Gentleman there, and had a great Estate also in *Ireland*; that she wou'd go down there in about two Months, and if I would give her my Company thither, I should be as welcome as her self for a Month or more as I pleas'd, till I should see how I lik'd the Country; and if I thought fit to live there, she would undertake they would take care, tho' they did not entertain Lodgers themselves, they would recommend me to some agreeable Family, where I should be plac'd to my content.

If this Woman had known my real Circumstances, she would never have laid so many Snares, and taken so many weary steps to catch a poor desolate Creature that was good for little when it was caught; and indeed I, whose Case was almost desperate, and thought I cou'd not be much worse, was not very anxious about what might befall me, provided they did me no personal Injury; so I suffered my self, tho' not without a great deal of Invitation, and great Professions of sincere Friendship and real Kindness, *I say*, I suffer'd my self to be prevail'd upon to go with her, and accordingly I put my self in a Posture for a Journey, tho' I did not absolutely know whither I was to go.

And now I found my self in great Distress; what little I had in the World was all in Money, except as before, a little Plate, some Linnen, and my Cloaths; as for Houshold stuff I had little or none, for I had liv'd always in Lodgings; but I had not one Friend in the World with whom to trust that little I had, or to direct me how to dispose of it; I thought of the Bank, and of the other Companies in *London*, but I had no Friend to commit the Management of it to, and to keep and carry about me Bank Bills, Tallies, Orders, and such things, I look'd upon as unsafe; that if they were lost my Money was lost, and then I was undone; and on the other hand I might be robb'd, and perhaps murder'd in a strange place for them; and what to do I knew not.

It came into my Thoughts one Morning that I would go to the *Bank* my self, where I had often been to receive the Interest of some Bills I had, and where I had found the Clark, to whom I apply'd my self, very Honest to me, and particularly so fair one time, that when I had miss-told my Money, and taken less than my due, and was coming away, he set me to rights and gave me the rest, which he might have put into his own Pocket.

I went to him, *and ask'd if he would trouble himself to be my Adviser, who was a poor friendless Widow, and knew not what to do: He told me*, if I desir'd his Opinion of any thing within the reach of his Business, he would do his Endeavour that I should not be wrong'd, but that he would also help me to a good sober Person of his Acquaintance, who was a Clark in such Business too, tho' not in their House, whose Judgment was good, and whose Honesty I mighty depend upon; for, added he, *I will answer for him, and for every step he takes; if he wrongs you, Madam, of one Farthing, it shall lye at my door*; and he delights

I was a little at a stand at this Discourse, but after some pause I told him, I had rather have depended upon him, because I had found him Honest, but if that cou'd not be, I would take his Recommendation sooner than any ones else; *I dare say, Madam, says he, that you will be as well satisfied with my Friend as with me, and he is thoroughly able to assist you, which I am not;* it seems he had his Hands full of the Business of the *Bank*, and had engag'd to meddle with no other Business than that of his Office: He added, that his Friend should take nothing of me for his Advice or Assistance, and this indeed encourag'd me.

He appointed the same Evening, after the *Bank* was shut, for me to meet him and his Friend: as soon as I saw his Friend, and he began but to talk of the Affair, I was fully satisfied I had a very honest Man to deal with, his Countenance spoke it, and his Character, as I heard afterwards, was every where so good, that I had no room for any more doubts upon me.

After the first meeting, in which I only said what I had said before, he appointed me to come the next Day, *telling me*, I might in the mean time satisfy my self of him by enquiry, which however I knew not how to do, having no Acquaintance my self.

Accordingly I met him the next Day, when I entered more freely with him into my Case; *I told him* my Circumstances at large, that *I was a Widow* come over from *America*, perfectly desolate and friendless; that I had a little Money, and but a little, and was almost distracted for fear of losing it, having no Friend in the World to trust with the management of it; that I was going into the North of *England* to live cheap, that my Stock might not

waste; that I would willingly Lodge my Money in the Bank, but that I durst not carry the Bills about me; and how to Correspond about it, or with who I knew not.

He told me I might lodge the Money in the Bank as an Account, and its being entred in the Books would entitle me to the Money at any time, and if I was in the North I might draw Bills on the Cashier, and receive it when I would; but that then it wou'd be esteem'd as running Cash, and the Bank would give no Interest for it; that I might buy Stock with it, and so it would lie in store for me, but that then if I wanted to dispose of it, I must come up to Town to Transfer it, and even it would be with some difficulty I should receive the half yearly Dividend, unless I was here in Person, or had some Friend I could trust with having the Stock in his Name to do it for me, and that would have the same difficulty in it as before; and with that he look'd hard at me and smil'd a little; at last, *says he*, why do you not get a head Steward, Madam, that may take you and your Money together, and then you would have the trouble taken off of your Hands? Ay, Sir, and the Money too it may be, *said I*, for truly *I find the hazard that way is as much as 'tis t'other way*; but I remember, *I said*, secretly to my self, I wish you would ask me the Question fairly, I would consider very seriously on it before I said NO.

He went on a good way with me, and I thought once or twice he was in earnest, but to my real Affliction, I found at last he had a Wife; but when he own'd he had a Wife he shook his Head, and said with some Concern, that indeed he had a *Wife*, and no *Wife*: I began to think he had been in the Condition of my late Lover, and that his Wife had been Lunatick, or some such thing: However, we had not much more Discourse at that time, but he told me he

was in too much hurry of business then, but that if I would come home to his House after their Business was over, he would consider what might be done for me, to put my Affairs in a Posture of Security: I told him I would come, and desir'd to know where he liv'd: He gave me a Direction in Writing, and, when he gave it me he read it to me, and said, there 'tis, Madam, if you dare trust your self with me: Yes Sir, *said I*, I believe I may venture to trust you with my self, for you have a Wife you say, and I don't want a Husband; besides, I dare trust you with my Money, which is all I have in the World, and if that were gone, I may trust my self any where.

He said some things in Jest that were very handsome and mannerly, and would have pleas'd me very well if they had been in earnest; *but that pass'd over*, I took the Directions, and appointed to be at his House at Seven o'Clock the same Evening.

When I came he made several Proposals for my placing my Money in the Bank, in order to my having Interest for it; but still some difficulty or other came in the way, which he objected as not safe; and I found such a sincere disinterested Honesty in him, that I began to think I had certainly found the honest Man I wanted; and that I could never put my self into better Hands; so I told him with a great deal of frankness that I had never met with a Man or Woman yet that I could trust, or in whom I could think my self safe, but that I saw he was so disinterestedly concern'd for my safety, that I would freely trust him with the management of that little I had, if he would accept to be Steward for a poor Widow that could give him no Salary.

He smil'd, and standing up, with great Respect salut-

ed me; he told me he could not but take it very kindly that I had so good an Opinion of him; that he would not deceive me, that he would do any thing in his Power to serve me and expect no Salary; but that he could not by any means accept of a Trust that might bring him to be suspected of Self-interest, and that if I should die he might have Disputes with my Executors, which he should be very loth to encumber himself with.

I told him if those were all his Objections I would soon remove them, and convince him that there was not the least room for any difficulty; for that, *first* as for suspecting him, if ever now was the time to suspect him, and not to put the Trust into his Hands, and whenever I did suspect him, he could but throw it up then and refuse to go on; *Then* as to Executors, I assur'd him I had no Heirs, nor any Relations in *England*, and I would have neither Heirs or Executors but himself, unless I should alter my Condition, and then his Trust and Trouble should cease together, which however I had no prospect of yet; but I told him if I died as I was, it should be all his own, and he would deserve it by being so faithful to me, as I was satisfied he would be.

He chang'd his Countenance at this Discourse, and ask'd me, how I came to have so much good-will for him? and looking very much pleas'd, said, he might very lawfully wish he was single for my sake; I smil'd and told him, that as he was not, my Offer could have no design upon him, and to wish, was not to be allow'd, 'twas Criminal to his Wife.

He told me I was wrong; for, *says he*, as I said before, I have a Wife and no Wife, and 'twould be no Sin to wish her hang'd; I know nothing of your Circumstances that

way, sir, *said I*; but it cannot be innocent to wish your Wife dead; I tell you, *says he again*, she is a Wife and no Wife; you don't know what I am, or what she is.

That's true, *said I*, Sir, I don't know what you are, but I believe you to be an honest Man, and that's the Cause of all my Confidence in you.

Well, well, *says he*, and so I am, but I am something else too, Madam; for, *says he*, to be plain with you, I am a *Cuckold*, and she is a *Whore*; he spoke it in a kind of Jest, but it was with such an awkward smile, that I perceiv'd it stuck very close to him, and he look'd dismally when he said it.

That alters the Case indeed, Sir, *said I*, as to that part you were speaking of; but a *Cuckold* you know may be an honest Man, it does not alter that Case at all; besides I think, *said I*, since your Wife is so dishonest to you, you are too honest to her, to own her for your Wife; but that, *said I*, is what I have nothing to do with. Nay, *says he*, I do think to clear my Hands of her, for to be plain with you, Madam, *added he*, I am no contented *Cuckold* neither: *On the other hand*, I assure you it provokes me to the highest Degree, but I can't help my self; she that will be a *Whore*, will be a *Whore*.

I wav'd the Discourse, and began to talk of my Business, but I found he could not have done with it, so I let him alone, and he went on to tell me all the Circumstances of his Case, too long to relate here; particularly, that having been out of *England* some time before he came to the Post he was in, she had had two Children in the mean time by an Officer of the Army; and that when he came to *England*, and, upon her Submission, took her again, and maintain'd her very well, yet she run away from him with a Linnen-Draper's Apprentice, robb'd him of what she

could come at, and continu'd to live from him still; so that Madam, *says he*, she is a Whore not by Necessity, which is the common Bait, but by Inclination, and for the sake of the Vice.

Well, I pitied him, and wish'd him well rid of her, and still would have talk'd of my Business, but it would not do; at last he looked Steadily at me, *look you*, Madam, *says he*, you came to ask Advice of me, and I will serve you as faithfully as if you were my own Sister; but I must turn the Tables, since you oblige me to do it, and are so friendly to me, and I think I must ask Advice of you; *tell me what must a poor abus'd fellow do with a Whore? What can I do to do my self Justice upon her?*

Alas, Sir, *says I*, 'Tis a Case too nice for me to advise in, but it seems she has run away from you, so you are rid of her fairly; what can you desire more? Ay she is gone indeed, *said he*, but I am not clear of her for all that. That's true, *says I*, she may indeed run you into Debt, but the Law has furnish'd you with Methods to prevent that also, you may Cry her down, *as they call it*.

No, no, *says he*, that is not the Case, I have taken care of all that; 'tis not that part that I speak of, but I would be rid of her that I might marry again.

Well, sir, *says I*, then you must Divorce her; if you can prove what you say, you may certainly get that done, and then you are free.

That's very tedious and expensive, *says he*.

Why, *says I*, if you can get any Woman you like, to take your Word, I suppose your Wife would not dispute the Liberty with you that she takes herself.

Ay, *says he*, but 'twou'd be hard to bring an honest Woman to do that; and for the other sort, *says he*, I have had enough of her to meddle with any more Whores.

It occur'd to me presently, I would have taken your Word with all my Heart, if you had but ask'd me the Question, but that was to my self; *to him I reply'd*, why you shut the Door against any honest Woman accepting you, for you condemn all that should venture upon you, and conclude, that a Woman that takes you now, can't be honest.

Why, *says he*, I wish you would satisfy me that an honest Woman would take me, I'd venture it, and then turns short upon me, *will you take me*, Madam?

That's not a fair Question, *says I*, after what you have said; however, least you shou'd think I wait only a Recantation of it, I shall answer you plainly, NO *not I*; my Business is of another kind with you, and I did not expect you would have turn'd my serious Application to you in my distracted Case, into a Comedy.

Why, Madam, *says he*, my Case is as distracted as yours can be, and I stand in as much need of Advice as you do, for I think if I have not Relief some where, I shall be mad my self, and I know not what course to take, I protest to you.

Why sir, *says I*, 'tis easier to give Advice in your Case than mine; speak then, *says he*, I beg of you, for now you encourage me.

Why, *says I*, if your Case is so plain, you may be legally Divorc'd, and then you may find honest Women enough to ask the Question of fairly, the Sex is not so scarce that you can want a Wife.

Well then, *said he*, I am in earnest, I'll take your Advice; but shall I ask you one Question seriously before hand?

Any Question, *said I*, but that you did before.

No, that Answer will not do, *said he*, for in short, that is the Question I shall ask.

You may ask what Questions you please, but you have my Answer to that already, *said I*; besides, Sir, *said I*, can you think so ill of me, as that I wou'd give any Answer to such a Question beforehand? Can any Woman alive believe you in earnest, or think you design any thing but to banter her?

Well, well, *says he*, I do not banter you, I am in earnest, consider of it.

But, Sir, *says I*, *a little gravely*, I came to you about my own Business, I beg of you to let me know, what you will advise me to do?

I will be prepar'd, *says he*, against you come again.

Nay, *says I*, you have forbid my coming any more.

Why so? *said he*, and look'd a little surpriz'd.

Because, *said I*, you can't expect I should visit you on the account you talk of.

Well, *says he*, you shall promise to come again however, and I will not say any more of it till I have the Divorce, but I desire you'll prepare to be better condition'd when that's done, for you shall be the Woman, or I will not be Divorc'd at all: I owe it to your unlooked for kindness, if to nothing else, but I have other Reasons too.

He could not have said anything in the World that pleas'd me better; however, I knew that the way to secure him was to stand off while the thing was so remote, as it appear'd to be, and that it was time enough to accept of it when he was able to perform it; so I said very respectfully to him, it was time enough to consider of these things, when he was in a Condition to talk of them; in the mean time I told him, I was going a great way from him, and he would find Objects enough to please him better: We broke off here for the present, and he made me promise him to come again the next Day, for my own Business,

which after some pressing I did; tho' had he seen farther into me, I wanted no pressing on that Account.

I came the next Evening accordingly, and brought my Maid with me, *to let him see that I kept a Maid*: He would have had me let the Maid have staid, but I would not, but order'd her aloud to come for me again about Nine a Clock, but he forbid that, and told me he would see me safe Home, which I was not very well pleased with, supposing he might do that to know where I liv'd, and enquire into my Character, and Circumstances: However, I ventur'd that, for all the People there knew of me, was to my Advantage; and all the Character he had of me, was, *that I was a Woman of Fortune*, and that I was a very modest sober Body; which whether true or not in the Main, yet you may see how necessary it is, for all Women who expect any thing in the World, to preserve the Character of their Virtue, even when perhaps they may have sacrific'd the Thing itself.

I found, *and was not a little pleas'd with it*, that he had provided a Supper for me: I found also he liv'd very handsomely, and had a House very handsomely furnish'd, and which I was rejoic'd at indeed, for I look'd upon it all as my own.

We had now a second Conference upon the Subject Matter of the last: He laid his Business very Home indeed; he protested his Affection to me, and indeed I had no room to doubt it; he declared that it began from the first Moment I talk'd with him, and long before I had mentioned leaving my Effects with him; 'tis no matter when it began, *thought I*, if it will but hold, 'twill be well enough: *He then told me*, how much the Offer I had made of trusting him with my Effects had engag'd him; so I intended it should, *thought I*, but then I thought you had

been a single Man too: After we had Supp'd, I observ'd he press'd me very hard to drink two or three Glasses of Wine, which however I declin'd, but drank one Glass or two: He then told me he had a Proposal to make to me, which I should promise him I would not take ill, if I should not grant it: I told him I hop'd he would make no dishonourable Proposal to me, especially in his own House, and that if it was such, I desir'd he would not mention it, that I might not be obliged to offer any Resentment to him that did not become the Respect I profess'd for him, and the Trust I had plac'd in him, in coming to this House; and beg'd of him he would give me leave to go away, and accordingly began to put on my Gloves, and prepare to be gone, tho' at the same time I no more intended it, than he intended to let me.

Well, he importun'd me not to talk of going; he assured me, he was very far from offering any such thing to me that was dishonourable, and if I thought so, he would chuse to say no more of it.

That part I did not relish at all; *I told him, [I] was ready to hear anything that he had to say, depending that he would say nothing unworthy of himself, or unfit for me to hear; upon this, he told me his Proposal was this; That I would marry him, tho' he had not yet obtain'd the Divorce from the Whore his Wife; and to satisfy me that he meant honourably, he would promise not to desire me to live with him, or go to Bed to him till the Divorce was obtain'd: My Heart said Yes to this Offer at first Word, but it was necessary to play the Hypocrite a little more with him; so I seem'd to decline the Motion with some warmth as unfair, told him that such a Proposal could be of no Signification, but to entangle us both in great Difficulties; for if he should not at last obtain the Divorce, yet we could not*

dissolve the Marriage, neither could we proceed in it; so that if he was disappointed in the Divorce, I left him to consider what a Condition we should both be in.

In short, I carried on the Argument against this so far, that I convinc'd him it was not a Proposal that had any Sense in it; then he went from it to another, *viz.* that I would Sign and Seal a Contract with him, Conditioning to marry him as soon as the Divorce was obtain'd, and to be void if he could not get it.

I told him that was more Rational than the other; but as this was the first time that ever I could imagine him weak enough to be in earnest, I did not use to say *Yes* at first asking, I would consider of it. I plaid with this Lover, as an Angler does with a Trout: I found I had him fast on the Hook, so I jested with his new Proposal, and put him off: *I told him* he knew little of me, and bad him enquire about me; I let him also go Home with me to my Lodging, tho' I would not ask him to go in, for *I told him* it was not Decent.

In short, I ventur'd to avoid Signing a Contract, and the Reason why I did it, was because the Lady that had invited me to go with her into *Lancashire* insisted so positively upon it, and promised me such great Fortunes, and fine things there, that I was tempted to go and try; perhaps, *said I*, I may mend my self very much, and then I made no scruple of quitting my honest Citizen, whom I was not so much in Love with as not to leave him for a Richer.

In a Word, I avoided a Contract; but told him I would go into the *North*, that he would know where to write to me by the Business I had entrusted with him, that I would give him a sufficient Pledge of my Respect for him, for I would leave almost all I had in the World in his Hands;

and I would thus far give him my Word, that as soon as he had sued out the Divorce, if he would send me an Account of it, I would come up to *London*, and that then we would talk seriously of the Matter.

It was a base Design I went with, *that I must confess*, tho' I was invited thither with a Design much worse, as the Sequel will discover; well I went with my Friend, *as I call'd her*, into *Lancashire*; all the way we went she caressed me with the utmost appearance of a sincere undissembled Affection; treated me, except my Coach-hire all the way; and her Brother brought a Gentleman's Coach to *Warrington* to receive us, and we were carried from thence to *Liverpool* with as much Ceremony as I could desire.

We were also entertain'd at a Merchant's House in *Liverpool* three or four Days very handsomely: I forbear to tell his Name, because of what follow'd; then she told me she would carry me to an Uncle's House of hers where we should be nobly entertain'd; and her Uncle, as she call'd him, sent a Coach and four Horses for us, and we were carried near forty Miles I know not whither.

We came however to a Gentleman's Seat, where was a numerous Family, a large Park, extraordinary Company indeed, and where she was call'd Cousin; I told her if she had resolv'd to bring me into such Company as this, she should have let me have furnish'd my self with better Cloaths; the Ladies took Notice of that, and told me very genteely, they did not value People in their own Country so much by their Cloaths, as they did in *London*; that their Cousin had fully inform'd them of my Quality, and that I did not want Cloaths to set me off; in short, they entertain'd me not like what I was, but like what they thought I had been, Namely, a Widow Lady of a great Fortune.

The first Discovery I made here was, that the Family were all *Roman Catbolicks*, and the Cousin too; [however], nobody in the World could behave better to me; and I had all the Civility shown that I could have had, if I had been of their Opinion: The Truth is, I had not so much Principle of any kind, as to be Nice in Point of Religion; and I presently learn'd to speak favourably of the *Romish Churcb*; particularly I told them I saw little, but the Pre-judice of Education in all the Differences that were among Christians about Religion, and if it had so happen'd that my Father had been a *Roman Catbolick*, I doubted not but I should have been as well pleas'd with their Religion as my own.

This obliged them in the highest Degree, and as I was besieg'd Day and Night with good Company, and pleasant Discourse, so I had two or three old Ladies that lay at me upon the Subject of Religion too; I was so Complain-sant that I made no scruple to be present at their Mass, and to conform to all their Gestures as they shew'd me the Pattern, but I would not come too cheap; so that I only in the main encouraged them to expect that I would turn *Roman Catbolick*, if I was instructed in the *Catholick Doctrine*, as they call'd it, and so the matter rested.

I stay'd here about six Weeks; and then my Conductor led me back to a Country Village, about six Miles from *Liverpool*, where her Brother (as she call'd him) came to visit me in his own Charriot, with two Footmen in a good Livery; and the next thing was to make Love to me: As it happen'd to me, one would think I could not have been cheated, and indeed I thought so my self, having a safe Card at Home, which I resolv'd not to quit unless I could mend my self very much: However, in all appearance this Brother was a Match worth my listning to, and the least

his Estate was valu'd at, was a 1000*l.* a Year, but the Sister said it was worth 1500*l.* a Year, and lay most of it in *Ireland*.

I that was a great Fortune, and pass'd for such, was above being ask'd how much my Estate was; and my false Friend taking it upon a foolish hearsay had rais'd it from 500*l.* to 5000*l.* and by the time she came into the Country she call'd it 15,000*l.* The *Irishman*, for such I understood him to be, was stark Mad at this Bait: In short, he courted me, made me Presents, and run in Debt like a mad Man for the Expences of his Courtship: He had, to give him his due, the Appearance of an extraordinary fine Gentleman; he was tall, well-shap'd, and had an extraordinary Address; talk'd as naturally of his Park, and his Stables; or his Horses, his Game-keepers, his Woods, his Tenants, and his Servants, as if he had been in a Mansion house, and I had seen them all about me.

He never so much as ask'd me about my Fortune or Estate; but assur'd me that when we came to *Dublin* he would Joynure me in 600*l.* a Year in good Land; and that he would enter into a Deed of Settlement, or Contract here, for the Performance of it.

This was such Language indeed as I had not been us'd to, and I was here beaten out of all my Measures; I had a she Devil in my Bosom, every Hour telling me how great her Brother liv'd: One time she would come for my Orders, how I would have my Coach painted, and how lin'd; and another time what Cloaths my Page should wear: In short, my Eyes were dazled, I had now lost my Power of saying NO, and to cut the Story short, I consented to be Married; but to be more private we were carried farther into the Country, and married by a Priest,

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which I was assur'd would marry us as effectually as a
Church of *England* Parson.

I cannot say, but I had some Reflections in this Affair, upon the dishonourable forsaking my faithful Citizen; who lov'd me sincerely, and who was endeavouring to quit himself of a scandalous Whore by whom he had been barbarously us'd, and promis'd himself infinite Happiness in his new Choice; which Choice was now giving up her self to another in a Manner almost as Scandalous as hers could be.

But the glittering show of a great Estate and of fine Things, which the deceived Creature that was now my Deceiver represented every Hour to my Imagination, hurried me away, and gave me no time to think of *London*, or of any thing there, much less of the Obligation I had to a Person of infinitely more real Merit than what was now before me.

But the thing was done, I was now in the Arms of my new Spouse, who appear'd still the same as before; great even to Magnificence, and nothing less than a Thousand Pounds a Year could support the Ordinary Equipage he appear'd in.

After we had been married about a Month, he began to talk of my going to *Westchester* in order to embark for *Ireland*. However, he did not hurry me, for we stay'd near three Weeks longer, and then he sent to *Chester* for a Coach to meet us at the *Black-Rock*, as they call it, over against *Liverpool*: Thither we went in a fine Boat they call a Pinnace with six Oars, his Servants, and Horses, and Baggage going in a Ferry-Boat. He made his Excuse to me, that he had not Acquaintance at *Chester*, but he would go before and get some handsome Appartment for me at a private House; I ask'd him how long we should

stay at *Chester*? he said not at all, any longer than one Night or two, but he would immediately hire a Coach to go to *Holyhead*; then I told him he should by no Means give himself the trouble to get private Lodgings for one Night or two, for that *Chester* being a great Place, I made no doubt but there would be very good Inns and Accommodation enough; so we lodg'd at an Inn not far from the Cathedral, I forgot what Sign it was at.

Here my Spouse talking of my going to *Ireland*, ask'd me if I had no Affairs to settle at *London* before we went off; I told him No, not of any great Consequence, but what might be done as well by Letter from *Dublin*: *Madam*, says he very respectfully, *I suppose the greatest part of your Estate, which my Sister tells me is most of it in Money in the Bank of England, lies secure enough, but in case it requir'd Transferring, or any way altering its Property, it might be necessary to go up to London, and settle those Things before we went over.*

I seem'd to look strange at it, and told him I knew not what he meant; that I had no Effects in the Bank of *England* that I knew of; and I hope he could not say that I had ever told him I had. No, he said, *I had not told him so, but his Sister had said the greatest part of my Estate lay there, and I only mention'd it my Dear*, said he, *that if there was any Occasion to settle it, or order any thing about it, we might not be oblig'd to the hazard and trouble of another Voyage back again*, for he added, *that he did not care to venture me too much upon the Sea.*

I was surpris'd at this talk, and began to consider what the meaning of it must be! and it presently occurr'd to me that my Friend, who call'd him Brother had represented me in Colours which were not my due; and I thought that I would know the bottom of it before I went out of

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England*, and before I should put my self into I knew not
whose Hands, in a strange Country.

Upon this I call'd his Sister into my Chamber the next Morning, and letting her know the Discourse her Brother and I had been upon, I conjur'd her to tell me, what she had said to him, and upon what Foot it was that she had made this Marriage? She own'd that she had told him that I was a great Fortune, and said that she was told so at *London*: *Told so*, says I warmly, *did I ever tell you so?* No she said, it was true I never did tell her so, but I had said several times that what I had, was in my own disposal: I did so, *return'd I very quick*, but I never told you I had anything call'd a Fortune; No, that I had one Hundred Pounds, or the Value of an Hundred Pounds in the World; and how did it consist with my being a Fortune, *said I*, that I should come here into the North of *England* with you, only upon the Account of living cheap? At these Words which I spoke warm and high, my Husband came into the Room, and I desir'd him to come in and sit down, for I had something of Moment to say before them both, which it was absolutely necessary he should hear.

He look'd a little disturb'd at the Assurance with which I seem'd to speak it, and came and sat down by me, having first shut the Door; upon which I began, for I was very much provok'd, and turning my self to him, *I am afraid*, says I, *my Dear*, for I spoke with kindness on his side, that you have a very great Abuse put upon you, and an Injury done you never to be repair'd in your marrying me, which however as I have had no Hand in it, I desire I may be fairly acquitted of it, and that the Blame may lye where it ought and no where else, for I wash my Hands of every part of it.

What Injury can be done me, *my Dear*, says he, in marrying you? I hope it is to my Honour and Advantage every way: I will soon explain it to you, *says I*, and I fear there will be no Reason to think yourself well us'd, but I will convince you, *my Dear*, *says I again*, that I have had no Hand in it.

He look'd now scar'd and wild, and began, I believed, to suspect what follow'd; however, looking towards me, and saying only, *go on*, he sat silent, as if to hear what I had more to say; so I went on; I ask'd you last Night, *said I*, speaking to him, if ever I made any boast to you of my Estate, or ever told you I had any Estate in the Bank of *England*, or any where else, and you own'd I had not, as is most true; and I desire you will tell me here, before your Sister, if ever I gave you any Reason from me to think so, or that ever we had any Discourse about it, and he own'd again I had not; *but said*, I had appeared always as a Woman of Fortune, and he depended on it that I was so, and hoped he was not deceived. I am not enquiring whether you have been deceived, *said I*, I fear you have, *and I too*; but I am clearing my self from being concern'd in deceiving you.

I have been now asking your Sister if ever I told her of any Fortune or Estate I had, or gave her any Particulars of it; and she owns I never did: And pray Madam, *said I*, be so just to me, to charge me if you can, if ever I pretend'd to you that I had an Estate; and why if I had, should I ever come down into this Country with you on purpose to spare *that little I had*, and live cheap? She could not deny one Word, but said she had been told in *London* that I had a very great Fortune, and that it lay in the Bank of *England*.

And now, Dear Sir, *said I*, turning my self to my new

Spouse *again*, be so just to me as to tell me who has abus'd both you and me so much, as to make you believe I was a Fortune, and prompt you to court me to this Marriage? He could not speak a Word, but pointed to her; and after some more pause, flew out in the most furious Passion that ever I saw a Man in my Life; cursing her, and calling her all the Whores and hard Names he could think of; and that she had ruin'd him, declaring that she had told him I had Fifteen Thousand Pounds, and that she was to have Five Hundred Pounds of him for procuring this Match for him: He then added, directing his Speech to me, that she was none of his Sister, but had been his Whore for two Years before, that she had had One Hundred Pounds of him in part of this Bargain, and that he was utterly undone if things were as I said; and in his rav-ing *he swore he would let her Heart's Blood out immediately*, which frightened her and me too; *she cried, said she had been told so in the House where I lodg'd*, but this aggravated him more than before that she should put so far upon him, and run things such a length upon no other Author-ity than *a bear-say*; and then turning to me again, said very honestly, he was afraid we were both undone; for to be plain, *my dear*, I have no Estate, *says he*, what little I had, this Devil has made me run out in putting me into this Equipage; she took the Opportunity of his being earnest in talking with me, and got out of the Room, and I never saw her more.

I was confounded now as much as he, and knew not what to say: I thought many ways that I had the worst of it, but his saying he was undone, and that he had no Estate neither put me into a meer Distraction; why, *says I to him*, this has been a hellish Juggle, for we are married here upon the Foot of a double Fraud; you are undone by

the Disappointment it seems, and if I had had a Fortune I had been cheated too, for you say you have nothing.

You would indeed have been cheated, my Dear, says he, but you would not have been undone, for Fifteen Thousand Pounds would have maintain'd us both very handsomely in this Country; and I had resolv'd to have dedicated every Groat of it to you; I would not have wrong'd you of a Shilling and the rest I would have made up in my Affection to you, and Tenderness of you as long as I liv'd.

This was very honest indeed, and I really believe he spoke as he intended, and that he was a Man that was as well qualified to make me happy, as to his Temper and Behaviour, as any Man ever was; but his having no Estate, and being run into Debt on this ridiculous Account in the Country, made all the Prospect dismal and dreadful, and I knew not what to say, or what to think.

I told him it was very unhappy, that so much Love, and so much good Nature as I discovered in him, should be thus precipitated into Misery; that I saw nothing before us but Ruin, for as to me, it was my unhappiness, that what little I had was not able to relieve us a Week, and with that I pull'd out a Bank Bill of 20*l.* and Eleven Guineas, which I told him I had saved out of my little Income; and that by the Account that Creature had given me of the way of living in that Country, I expected it would maintain me three or four Years; that if it was taken from me, I was left destitute, and he knew what the Condition of a Woman must be, if she had no Money in her Pocket; however, *I told him*, if he would take it, there it was.

He told me with great concern, and I thought I saw Tears in his Eyes, that he would not touch it, that he abhor'd the Thoughts of striping me, and making me Mis-.

able; that he had Fifty Guineas left, which was all he had in the World, and he pull'd it out and threw it down on the Table, bidding me take it, tho' he were to Starve for want of it.

I returned with the same concern for him, that I could not bear to hear him talk so; that on the contrary, if he could propose any probable Method of living, I would do any thing that became me, and that I would live as narrow as he could desire.

He beg'd of me to talk no more at that rate, for it would make him Distracted; he said he was bred a Gentleman, tho' he was reduc'd to a low Fortune, and that there was but one way left which he could think of, and that would not do, unless I cou'd answer him one Question, which, however, he said he would not press me to; I told him I would answer it honestly, whether it would be to his Satisfaction or no, that I could not tell.

Why then, my Dear, tell me plainly, *says he*, will the little you have keep us together in any Figure, or in any Station or Place, or will it not?

It was my Happiness that I had not discover'd my self, or my Circumstances at all; No, not so much as my Name, and seeing there was nothing to be expected from him, however good humour'd, and however honest he seem'd to be, but to live on what I knew would soon be wasted, I resolv'd to conceal every thing but the *Bank-Bill*, and Eleven Guineas, and I would have been very glad to have lost that, and have been set down where he took me up: I had indeed another *Bank-Bill* about me of 30*l.*, which was the whole of what I brought with me, as well to subsist on in the Country, as not knowing what might offer; because this Creature, the *go-between* that had thus betray'd us both, had made me believe strange things of

marrying to my Advantage, and I was not willing to be without Money whatever might happen. This Bill I conceal'd, and that made me the freer of the rest, in Consideration of his Circumstances, for I really pitied him heartily.

But to return to this Question, *I told him*, I never willingly deceiv'd him, and I never would: I was very sorry to tell him that the little I had would not subsist us; that it was not sufficient to subsist me alone in the *South Country*, and that this was the Reason that made me put my self into the Hands of that Woman who call'd him Brother, she having assured me that I might board very handsomely at a Town call'd *Manchester*, where I had not yet been, for about six Pounds a Year, and my whole Income not being above 15*l.* a Year, I thought I might live easy upon it, and wait for better things.

He shook his Head, and remain'd silent, and a very melancholly Evening we had; however we supp'd together, and lay together that Night, and when we had almost supp'd he look'd a little better, and more chearful, and call'd for a Bottle of Wine; *Come my Dear*, says he, *tho' the Case is bad, it is to no Purpose to be dejected, Come, be as easy as you can, I will endeavour to find out some way or other to live; if you can but subsist your self, that is better than nothing, I must try the World again; a Man ought to think like a Man: To be discouraged, is to yield to the Misfortune*; with this he fill'd a Glass, and drank to me, holding my Hand all the while the Wine went down, and protesting his main concern was for me.

It was really a true gallant Spirit he was of, and it was the more Grievous to me: 'Tis something of Relief even to be undone by a man of Honour, rather than by a Scoundrel; but here the greatest Disappointment was on his

side, for he had really spent a great deal of Money, and it was very remarkable on what poor Terms she proceeded; first, the baseness of the Creature herself is to be observ'd, who for the getting One Hundred Pounds herself, could be content to let him spend Three or Four more, tho' perhaps it was all he had in the World, and more than all; when she had not the least Ground more than a little Tea-Table Chat, to say that I had any Estate, or was a Fortune, or *the like*: It is true the design of deluding a Woman of Fortune, if I had been so, was base enough; the putting the Face of great Things upon poor Circumstances was a Fraud, and bad enough; but the Case a little differ'd too, and that in his Favour, for he was not a Rake that made a Trade to delude Women, and as some have done, get six or seven Fortunes after one another, and then rifle and run away from them; but he was already a Gentleman, unfortunate and low, but had liv'd well; and tho' if I had had a Fortune, I should have been enrag'd at the Slut for betraying me; yet really for the Man, a Fortune would not have been ill bestow'd on him, for he was a lovely Person indeed; of generous Principles, good Sense, and of abundance of good Humour.

We had a great deal of close Conversation that Night, for we neither of us slept much; he was as Penitent, for having put all those Cheats upon me, as if it had been Fellony, and that he was going to Execution; he offered me again every Shilling of the Money he had about him, and said, he would go into the Army and seek for more.

I ask'd him why he would be so unkind to carry me into Ireland, when I might suppose he could not have subsisted me there? He took me in his Arms, My Dear, said he, I never design'd to go to Ireland at all, much less to have carried you thither; but came hither to be out of the Observation of the

People, who had heard what I pretended to, and that no Body might ask me for Money before I was furnish'd to supply them.

But where then, *said I*, were we to have gone next?

Why my Dear, *said he*, I'll confess the whole Scheme to you, as I had laid it; I purposed here to ask you something about your Estate, as you see I did, and when you, as I expected you would, had enter'd into some Account of the Particulars, I would have made an Excuse to have put off our Voyage to *Ireland* for some time, and so have gone for *London*.

Then my Dear, *says he*, I resolv'd to have confess'd all the Circumstances of my own Affairs to you, and let you know I had indeed made use of these Artifices to obtain your Consent to marry me, but had now nothing to do but to ask your Pardon, and to tell you how abundantly I would endeavour to make you forget what was past, by the Felicity of the Days to come.

Truly, *said I to him*, I find you would soon have conquer'd me; and it is my Affliction now, that I am not in a Condition to let you see how easily I should have been reconcil'd to you, and have pass'd by all the Tricks you had put upon me, in Recompence of so much good Humour; but my Dear, *said I*, what can we do now? We are both undone, and what better are we for our being reconcil'd, seeing we have nothing to live on.

We propos'd a great many things, but nothing could offer, where there was nothing to begin with: He beg'd me at last to talk no more of it, for he said I would break his Heart; so we talk'd of other things a little, till at last he took a Husband's leave of me, and so went to Sleep.

He rose before me in the Morning, and indeed having lain awake almost all Night, I was very sleepy, and lay till

near Eleven o'Clock, in this time he took his Horses, and three Servants, and all his Linnen and Baggage, and away he went, leaving a short, but moving Letter for me on the Table, as follows:

MY DEAR,

I AM a Dog; I have abus'd you; but I have been drawn in to do it by a base Creature, contrary to my Principle, and the general Practice of my Life: Forgive me, my Dear! I ask you Pardon with the greatest Sincerity; I am the most miserable of Men, in having deluded you: I have been so happy to Possess you, and am now so wretched as to be forc'd to fly from you: Forgive me, my Dear, once more I say forgive me! I am not able to see you ruin'd by me, and my self unable to support you: Our Marriage is nothing, I shall never be able to see you again; I here discharge you from it; if you can marry to your Advantage do not decline it on my Account; I here swear to you on my Faith, and on the Word of a Man of Honour, I will never disturb your Repose if I should know of it, which however is not likely: On the other hand, if you should not marry, and if good Fortune should befall me, it shall be all yours where ever you are.

I have put some of the Stock of Money I have left into your Pocket; take Places for your self and your Maid in the Stage Coach, and go for London; I hope it will bear your Charges thither, without breaking into your own: Again I sincerely ask your Pardon, and will do so, as often as I shall ever think of you.

Adieu, my Dear, for ever,

I am yours most Affectionately,

J.E.

Nothing that ever befel me in my Life, sunk so deep

into my Heart as this Farewel: I reproach'd him a Thousand times in my Thoughts for leaving me, for I would have gone with him thro' the World, if I had beg'd my Bread. I felt in my Pocket, and there I found ten Guineas, his Gold Watch, and two little Rings, one a small Diamond Ring, worth only about Six Pound, and the other a plain Gold Ring.

I sat down and look'd upon these Things two Hours together, and scarce spoke a Word, till my Maid interrupted me, by telling me my Dinner was ready: I eat but little, and after Dinner I fell into a violent Fit of Crying, every now and then, calling him by his Name, which was *James*; *O Jemy!* said I, *come back, come back, I'll give you all I have; I'll beg, I'll starve with you*: And thus I run Raving about the Room several times, and then sat down between whiles, and then walking about again, call'd upon him to *come back*, and then cry'd again; and thus I pass'd the Afternoon, till about seven o'Clock, when it was near Dusk in the Evening, being *August*, when to my unspeakable Surprise he comes back into the Inn, and comes directly up into my Chamber.

I was in the greatest Confusion imaginable, and so was he too: I could not imagine what should be the Occasion of it; and began to be at odds with my self whether to be glad or sorry; but my Affection byass'd all the rest, and it was impossible to conceal my Joy, which was too great for Smiles, for it burst out into Tears. He was no sooner enter'd the Room, but he run to me and took me in his Arms, holding me fast and almost stopping my Breath with his Kisses, but spoke not a Word; at length I began, *my Dear*, said I, *How could you go away from me?* To which he gave no Answer, for it was impossible for him to speak.

When our Extasies were a little over, he told me he

was gone above 15 Miles, but it was not in his Power to go any farther, without coming back to see me again, and to take his leave of me once more.

I told him how I had pass'd my time, and how loud I had call'd him to *come back again*; he told me he heard me very plain upon *Delamere Forest*, at a Place about 12 Miles off: *I smil'd*; Nay says he, *Do not think I am in Jest, for if ever I heard your Voice in my Life, I heard you call me aloud, and sometimes I thought I saw you running after me*; Why said I, what did I say? for I had not nam'd the Words to him, *you call'd aloud*, says he, *and said, O Jemy! O Jemy! come back, come back*.

I laugh'd at him, *my Dear*, says he, *do not Laugh, for depend upon it, I heard your Voice as plain as you bear mine now; if you please, I'll go before a Magistrate and make Oath of it*; I then began to be amaz'd and surpriz'd, and indeed frightened, and told him what I had really done, and how I had call'd after him, as above. When we had amus'd ourselves awhile about this, I said to him, well, you shall go away from me no more, I'll go all over the World with you rather: *He told me*, it would be a very difficult thing for him to leave me, but since it must be, he hoped I would make it as easy to me as I could; but as for him, it would be his Destruction, that he foresaw.

However he told me that he had consider'd he had left me to Travel to *London* alone, which was a long Journey; and that as he might as well go that way, as any way else, he was resolv'd to see me thither, or near it; and if he did go away then without taking his leave, I should not take it ill of him, and this he made me promise.

He told me how he had dismiss'd his three Servants, sold their Horses, and sent the Fellows away to seek their Fortunes, and all in a little time, at a Town on the Road, I

know not where; and, *says he*, it cost me some Tears all alone by my self, to think how much happier they were than their Master, for they could go to the next Gentleman's House to see for a Service, whereas, *said he*, I knew not whither to go, or what to do with my self.

I told him, I was so compleatly miserable in parting with him, that I could not be worse; and that now he was come again, I would not go from him, if he would take me with him, let him go whither he would; and in the mean time I agreed that we would go together to *London*; but I could not be brought to consent he should go away at last, and not take his leave of me; but told him Jesting, that if he did, I would call him back again as loud as I did before; Then I pull'd out his Watch and gave it him back, and his two Rings, and his Ten Guineas; but he would not take them, which made me very much suspect that he resolv'd to go off upon the Road, and leave me.

The truth is, the Circumstances he was in, the passionate Expressions of his Letter, the kind Gentlemanly Treatment I had from him in all the Affair, with the Concern he show'd for me in it, his manner of Parting with that large Share which he gave me of his little Stock left, all these had join'd to make such Impressions on me, that I could not bear the Thoughts of parting with him.

Two Days after this we quitted *Chester*, I in the Stage Coach, and he on Horseback; I dismiss'd my Maid at *Chester*; he was very much against my being without a Maid, but she being hired in the Country, keeping no Servant at *London*: I told him it would have been barbarous to have taken the poor Wench, and have turn'd her away as soon as I came to Town; and it would also have been a needless Charge on the Road, so I satisfy'd him, and he was easy on that Score.

He came with me as far as *Dunstable*, within 30 Miles of *London*, and then he told me Fate and his own Misfortunes oblig'd him to leave me, and that it was not Convenient for him to go to *London*, for Reasons, which it was of no value to me to know, and I saw him preparing to go. The Stage Coach we were in, did not usually stop at *Dunstable*, but I desiring it for a Quarter of an Hour, they were content to stand at an Inn-Door awhile, and we went into the House.

Being in the Inn, I told him I had but one Favour more to ask him, and that was, that since he could not go any farther, he would give me leave to stay a Week or two in the Town with him, that we might in that time think of something to prevent such a ruinous thing to us both, as a final Separation would be; and that I had something of Moment to offer to him, which perhaps he might find Practicable to our Advantage.

This was too reasonable a Proposal to be denied, so he call'd the Landlady of the House, *and told her*, his Wife was taken ill, and so ill that she cou'd not think of going any farther in the Stage Coach, which had tir'd her almost to Death, and ask'd if she cou'd not get us a Lodging for two or three Days in a private House where I might rest me a little, for the Journey had been too much for me? The Landlady, a good sort of a Woman, well bred, and very obliging, came immediately to see me; told me, *she had two or three very good Rooms in a part of the House quite out of the Noise, and if I saw them, she did not doubt but I would like them, and I should have one of her Maids, that should do nothing else but wait on me*; this was so very kind, that I could not but accept of it; so I went to look on the Rooms, and lik'd them very well, and indeed they were extraordinarily Furnish'd, and very pleasant Lodgings;

so we paid the Stage Coach, took out our Baggage, and resolv'd to stay here a while.

Here *I told him*, I would live with him now till all my Money was spent, but would not let him spend a Shilling of his own: We had some kind squabble about that, *but I told him* it was the last time I was like to enjoy his Company, and I desir'd he would let me be Master in that thing only, and he should govern in every thing else so he acquiesc'd.

Here one Evening taking a Walk into the Fields, *I told him*, I would now make the Proposal to him I had told him of; accordingly I related to him how I had liv'd in *Virginia*, that I had a Mother, I believ'd, was alive there still, tho' my Husband was dead some Years; *I told him*, that had not my Effects miscarry'd, which by the way I magnify'd pretty much, I might have been Fortune good enough to him to have kept us from being parted in this manner: Then I enter'd into the manner of Peoples settling in those Countries, how they had a quantity of Land given them by the Constitution of the Place; and if not, that it might be purchased at so easy a Rate that it was not worth naming.

I then gave him a full and distinct account of the nature of Planting, how with carrying over but two or three Hundred Pounds value in *English* Goods, with some Servants and Tools, a Man of Application wou'd presently lay a Foundation for a Family, and in a few Years would raise an Estate.

I let him into the nature of the Product of the Earth, how the Ground was Cur'd and Prepar'd, and what the usual Increase of it was; and demonstrated to him, that in a very few Years, with such a Beginning, we should be as certain of being Rich, as we were now certain of being Poor.

He was surpriz'd at my Discourse; for we made it the whole Subject of our Conversation for near a Week together, in which time I laid it down in black and white, *as we say*, that it was morally impossible, with a supposition of any reasonable good Conduct, but that we must thrive there and do very well.

Then I told him what measures I would take to raise such a Sum as 300*l.* or thereabouts; and I argued with him how good a Method it would be to put an end to our Misfortunes, and restore our Circumstances in the World, to what we had both expected; and I added, that after seven Years, we might be in a Posture to leave our Plantation in good Hands, and come over again and receive the Income of it, and live here and enjoy it; and I gave him Examples of some that had done so, and liv'd now in very good Figure in *London*.

In short, I press'd him so to it, that he almost agreed to it, but still something or other broke it off; till at last he turn'd the Tables, and began to talk almost to the same purpose of *Ireland*.

He told me that a Man that could confine himself to a Country Life, and that cou'd but find Stock to enter upon any Land, should have Farms there for 50*l.* a Year, as good as were let here for 200*l.* a Year; that the Produce was such, and so Rich the Land, that if much was not laid up, we were sure to live as handsomely upon it as a Gentleman of 3000*l.* a Year could do in *England*; and that he had laid a Scheme to leave me in *London*, and go over and try; and if he found he could lay a handsome Foundation of living suitable to the Respect he had for me, as he doubted not he should do, he would come over and fetch me.

I was dreadfully afraid that upon such a Proposal he would have taken me at my Word, *viz.* to turn my little

Income into Money, and let him carry it over into *Ireland* and try his Experiment with it; but he was too just to desire it, or to have accepted it if I had offer'd it; and he anticipated me in that, for he added, that he would go and try his Fortune that way, and if he found he cou'd do any thing at it to live, then by adding mine to it when I went over, we should live like our selves; but that he would not hazard a Shilling of mine till he had made the Experiment with a little, and he assur'd me that if he found nothing to be done in *Ireland*, he would then come to me and join in my Project for *Virginia*.

He was so earnest upon his Project being to be try'd first, that I cou'd not withstand him; however, he promis'd to let me hear from him in a very little time after his arriving there, to let me know whether his prospect answer'd his Design, that if there was not a probability of Success, I might take the Occasion to prepare for our other Voyage, and then, he assur'd me, he would go with me to *America* with all his Heart.

I could bring him to nothing farther than this, and which entertain'd us near a Month, during which I enjoy'd his Company, which was the most entertaining that ever I met with in my life before. In this time he let me into part of the Story of his own Life, which was indeed surprizing, and full of an infinite Variety, sufficient to fill up a much brighter History for its Adventures and Incidents, than any I ever saw in Print: But I shall have occasion to say more of him hereafter.

We parted at last, tho' with the utmost reluctance on my side, and indeed he took his leave very unwillingly too, but Necessity oblig'd him, for his Reasons were very good, why he would not come to *London*, as I understood more fully afterwards.

I gave him a Direction how to write to me, tho' still I reserv'd the grand Secret, which was not to let him ever know my true Name, who I was, or where to be found; he likewise let me know how to write a Letter to him, so that he said he would be sure to receive it.

I came to *London* the next Day after we parted, but did not go directly to my old Lodgings; but for another nameless Reason took a private Lodging in *St. John's-Street*, or as it is vulgarly call'd *St. Jones's* near *Clarkenwell*; and here being perfectly alone, I had leisure to sit down and reflect seriously upon the last seven Months Ramble I had made, for I had been abroad no less; the pleasant Hours I had with my last Husband I look'd back on with an infinite deal of Pleasure; but that Pleasure was very much lessen'd, when I found some time after that I was really with Child.

This was a perplexing thing because of the Difficulty which was before me, where I should get leave to *Lye-In*; it being one of the nicest things in the World at that time of Day, for a Woman that was a Stranger, and had no Friends, to be entertain'd in that Circumstance without Security, which I had not, neither could I procure any.

I had taken care all this while to preserve a Correspondence with my Friend at the Bank, or rather he took care to Correspond with me, for he wrote to me once a Week; and tho' I had not spent my Money so fast as to want any from him, yet I often wrote also to let him know I was alive; I had left Directions in *Lancashire*, so that I had these Letters convey'd to me; and during my Recess at *St. Jones's* I received a very obliging Letter from him, assuring me that his Process for a Divorce went on with Success, tho' he met with some Difficulties in it that he did not expect.

I was not displeas'd with the News, that his Process was more tedious than he expected; for tho' I was in no condition to have had him yet, not being so foolish to marry him when I knew my self to be with Child by another Man, as some I know have ventur'd to do; yet I was not willing to lose him, and in a word, resolv'd to have him if he continu'd in the same mind, as soon as I was up again; for I saw apparently I should hear no more from my other Husband; and as he had all along press'd me to Marry, and had assur'd me he would not be at all disgusted at it, or ever offer to claim me again, so I made no scruple to resolve to do it if I could, and if my other Friend stood to his Bargain; and I had a great deal of Reason to be assur'd that he would, by the Letters he wrote to me, which were the kindest and most obliging that could be.

I now grew Big, and the people where I lodg'd perceiving it, and began to take notice of it to me, and as far as Civility would allow, intimated that I must think of removing; this put me to extreme perplexity, and I grew very melancholly, for indeed I knew not what Course to take, I had Money, but no Friends, and was like now to have a Child upon my Hands to keep, which was a difficulty I had never had upon me yet, as my Story hitherto makes appear.

In the course of this Affair I fell very ill, and my Melancholly really encreas'd my Distemper; my Illness prov'd at length to be only an Ague, but my Apprehensions were really that I should Miscarry; I should not say Apprehensions, for indeed I would have been glad to miscarry, but I cou'd never entertain so much as a thought of taking any thing to make me Miscarry, I abhor'd, I say, so much as the thought of it.

However, speaking of it, the Gentlewoman who kept

the House propos'd to me to send for a Midwife; I scrupled it at first, but after some time consented, but told her I had no Acquaintance with any Midwife, and so left it to her.

It seems the Mistress of the House was not so great a Stranger to such Cases as mine was, as I thought at first she had been, as will appear presently, and she sent for a Midwife of the right sort, that is to say, the right sort for me.

The Woman appear'd to be an experienced Woman in her Business, I mean as a Midwife, but she had another Calling too, in which she was as expert as most Women, if not more: My Landlady had told her I was very Melancholly, and that she believ'd that had done me harm; and once, *before me*, said to her, Mrs. B——, I believe this Lady's Trouble is of a kind that is pretty much in your way, and therefore if you can do anything for her, pray do, for she is a very civil Gentlewoman, and so she went out of the Room.

I really did not understand her, but my Mother Midnight began very seriously to explain what she meant, as soon as she was gone: Madam, *says she*, you seem not to understand what your Landlady means, and when you do, you need not let her know at all that you do so.

She means that you are under some Circumstances that may render your Lying-In difficult to you, and that you are not willing to be expos'd; I need say no more, but to tell you, that if you think fit to communicate so much of your Case to me, as is necessary, for I do not desire to pry into those things, I perhaps may be in a Condition to assist you, and to make you easy, and remove all your dull Thoughts upon that Subject.

Every word this Creature said was a Cordial to me, and

put new Life and new Spirit into my very Heart; my Blood began to circulate immediately, and I was quite another Body; I eat my Victuals again, and grew better presently after it: She said a great deal more to the same purpose, and then having press'd me to be free with her, and promis'd in the solemnest manner to be secret, she stop'd a little, as if waiting to see what Impression it made on me, and what I would say.

I was too sensible of the want I was in of such a Woman, not to accept her Offer; *I told her* my Case was partly as she guess'd, and partly not, for I was really married, and had a Husband, tho' he was so remote at that time, as that he cou'd not appear publickly.

She took me short, *and told me*, that was none of her Business, all the Ladies that came under her Care were married Women to her; every Woman, *says she*, that is with Child has a Father for it, and whether that Father was a Husband or no Husband, was no Business of hers; her Business was to assist me in my present Circumstances, whether I had a Husband or no; for, *Madam*, *says she*, to have a Husband that cannot appear, is to have no Husband, and therefore whether you are a Wife or a Mistress is all one to me.

I found presently, that whether I was a Whore or a Wife, I was to pass for a Whore here, so I let that go; *I told her*, it was true as she said, but that however, if I must tell her my Case, I must tell it her as it was: So I related it as a short as I could, and I concluded it to her: *I trouble you with this*, Madam, said, I, *not that, as you said before, it is much to the purpose in your affair; but this is to the purpose*, Namely, *that I am not in any pain about being seen, or being conceal'd, for 'tis perfectly indifferent to me: but my difficulty is, that I have no Acquaintance in this part of the Nation.*

I understand you, Madam, *says she*, you have no Security to bring to prevent the Parish Impertinences usual in such Cases; and perhaps, *says she*, do not know very well how to dispose of the Child when it comes; the last, *says I*, is not so much my Concern as the first: Well, Madam, *answers the Midwife*, dare you put your self into my Hands? I live in such a place, tho' I do not enquire after you, you may enquire after me, my Name is *B*_____, I live in such a Street, naming the Street, at the Sign of the *Cradle*, my Profession is a Midwife, and I have many Ladies that come to my House to Lye-In; I have given Security to the Parish in General to secure them from any Charge, from what shall come into the World under my Roof; I have but one Question to ask in the whole Affair, Madam, *says she*, and if that be answer'd, you shall be entirely easy of the rest.

I presently understood what she meant, and told her, Madam, *I believe I understand you*; I thank God, *tho' I want Friends in this Part of the World, I do not want Money, so far as may be Necessary, tho' I do not abound in that neither*: This I added, because I would not make her expect great things; well Madam, *says she*, that is the thing indeed, without which nothing can be done in these Cases; and yet, *says she*, you shall see that I will not impose upon you, or offer anything that is unkind to you, and you shall know every thing before hand, that you may suit your self to the Occasion, and be either costly or sparing as you see fit.

I told her, she seem'd to be so perfectly sensible of my Condition, that I had nothing to ask of her but this, that as I had Money sufficient, but not a great Quantity, she would order it so, that I might be at as little superfluous Charge as possible.

She reply'd, that she should bring in an Account of the Expences of it, in two or three Shapes, I should chuse as I pleas'd; and I desir'd her to do so.

The next Day she brought it, and the Copy of her three Bills was as follows.

	<i>l. s. d.</i>
1. For three Months Lodging in her House, including my Dyt at 10s. a Week..	06 00 0
2. For a Nurse for the Month, and Use of Child-bed Linnen	01 10 0
3. For a Minister to Christen the Child, and to the Godfathers and Clark....	01 10 0
4. For a Supper at the Christening if I had five Friends at it.....	01 00 0
For her Fees as a Midwife, and the taking off the Trouble of the Parish.....	03 03 0
To her Maid Servant attending.....	<hr/> 00 10 0
	<hr/> 13 13 0

This was the first Bill, the Second was in the same Terms.

	<i>l. s. d.</i>
1. For three Months Lodging and Dyt &c., at 20s. per Week.....	12 00 0
2. For a Nurse for the Month, and the Use of Linnen and Lace.....	02 10 0
3. For the Minister to Christen the Child, &c. as above.....	02 00 0
4. For a Supper, and for Sweatmeats.....	03 03 0
For her Fees, as above.....	05 05 0
For a Servant-Maid.....	<hr/> 01 00 0
	<hr/> 26 18 0

This was the second rate Bill, the third, *she said*, was for a degree Higher, and when the Father, or Friends appeared.

	<i>l s. d.</i>
1. For three Months Lodging and Diet, having two Rooms and a Garret for a Servant	30 00 0
2. For a Nurse for the Month, and the finest Suit of Child-bed Linnen	04 04 0
3. For the Minister to Christen the Child, &c.	02 10 0
4. For a Supper, the Gentleman to send in the Wine	06 00 0
For my Fees, &c.	10 10 0
The Maid besides their own Maid only	00 10 0
	53 14 0

I look'd upon all the three Bills, and smil'd, *and told her*, I did not see but that she was very reasonable in her Demands, and things consider'd, and I did not doubt but her Accommodations were good.

She told me, I should be a Judge of that, when I saw them: *I told her*, I was sorry to tell her that I fear'd I must be her lowest rated Customer, *and perhaps Madam*, said I, *you will make me the less Wellcome upon that Account*. No, not at all, *said she*, for where I have One of the third Sort, I have Two of the Second, and Four of the First, and I get as much by them in Proportion, as by any; but if you doubt my Care of you, I will allow any Friend you have to see if you are well waited on, or no.

Then she explain'd the Particulars of her Bill; in the first Place, Madam, *said she*, I would have you observe,

that here is three Months keeping you at but 10s. a Week, I undertake to say you will not complain of my Table: I suppose, *says she*, you do not live Cheaper where you are now; No, indeed, *said I*, nor so Cheap, for I give six Shillings *per Week* for my Chamber, and find my own Dyt, which costs me a great deal more.

Then Madam, *says she*, if the Child should not live, as it sometimes happens, there is the Minister's Article sav-ed; and if you have no Friends to come, you may save the Expence of a Supper; so that take those Articles out, Madam, *says she*, your Lying-In will not cost you above 5*l.* 3*s.* more than your ordinary Charge of Living.

This was the most reasonable thing that I ever heard of; so I smil'd, and told her I would come and be a Custo-mer; *but I told her also*, that as I had two Months, and more to go, I might perhaps be obliged to stay longer with her than three Months, and desir'd to know if she would not be oblig'd to remove me before it was proper; No, *she said*, her House was large, and besides, she never put any Body to remove, that had Lain-In, 'till they were willing to go; and if she had more Ladies offer'd, she was not so ill belov'd among her Neighbours, but she could provide Accommodation for Twenty, if there was Occa-sion.

I found she was an eminent Lady in her way, and *in short*, I agreed to put my self into her Hands: She then talk'd of other things, look'd about into my Accommoda-tions, where I was, found fault with my wanting Attend-ance, and Conveniences, and that I should not be us'd so at her House: *I told her*, I was shy of speaking, for the Woman of the House look'd stranger, or at least I thought so, since I had been Ill, because I was with Child; and I was afraid she would put some Affront or

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other upon me, supposing that I had been able to give
but a slight Account of my self.

O dear, *says she*, her Ladyship is no stranger to these things; she has try'd to entertain Ladies in your Condition, but could not secure the Parish; and besides, such a nice Lady as you take her to be; however, since you are agoing you shall not meddle with her, but I'll see you are a little better look'd after while you are here, and it shall not cost you the more neither.

I did not understand her: however, I thank'd her, so we parted; the next Morning she sent me a Chicken roasted and hot, and a Bottle of Sherry, and ordered the Maid to tell me, that she was to wait on me every Day as long as I staid there.

This was surprizingly good and kind, and I accepted it very willingly; At Night she sent to me again, to know if I wanted any thing, and to order the Maid to come to her in the Morning for Dinner; the Maid had Orders to make me some Chocolate in the Morning before she came away, and at Noon she brought me the Sweetbread of a Breast of Veal whole, and a Dish of Soup for my Dinner, and after this manner she nurs'd me up at a distance, so that I was mightily well pleased, and quickly well, for indeed my Dejections before were the principal Part of my Illness.

I expected, as is usually the Case among such People, that the Servant she sent me would have been some impudent brazen Wench of *Drury Lane* Breeding, and I was very uneasy upon that Account, so I would not let her lye in the House the first Night, but had my Eyes about me as narrowly as if she had been a publick Thief.

My Gentlewoman guess'd presently what was the matter, and sent her back with a short Note, that I might

depend upon the honesty of her Maid; that she would be answerable for her upon all Accounts; and that she took no Servants without very good Security: I was then perfectly easy, and indeed the Maid's Behaviour spoke for it self, for a modester, quieter, soberer Girl never came into any Body's Family, and I found her so afterwards.

As soon as I was well enough to go Abroad, I went with the Maid to see the House, and to see the Apartment I was to have; and every thing was so handsome and so clean, that, in short, I had nothing to say, but was wonderfully pleased with what I had met with, which considering the melancholly Circumstances I was in, was beyond what I looked for.

It might be expected that I should give some Account of the Nature of the wicked Practices of this Woman, in whose Hands I was now fallen; but it would be but too much Encouragement to the Vice, to let the World see what easy Measures were here taken to rid the Women's Burthen of a Child clandestinely gotten: This grave Matron had several Sorts of Practice, and this was one, that if a Child was born, tho' not in her House, for she had the Occasion to be call'd to many private Labours, she had People always ready, who for a Piece of Money would take the Child off their Hands, and off from the Hands of the Parish too; and those Children, as she said, were honestly taken Care of: What should become of them all, considering so many, as by her Account she was concern'd with, I cannot conceive.

I had many times Discourses upon that Subject with her; but she was full of this Argument, that she sav'd the Life of many an Innocent Lamb, as she call'd them, which would perhaps have been Murder'd; and of many a Woman, who made Desperate by the Misfortune,

would otherwise be tempted to Destroy their Children: I granted her that this was true, and a very commendable thing, provided the poor Children fell into good Hands afterwards, and were not abus'd and neglected by the Nurses; she answered, that she always took care of that, and had no Nurses in her Business, but what were very Good People, and such as might be depended upon.

I could say nothing to the contrary, and so was oblig'd to say, *Madam I do not question but you do your Part, but what those People do is the main Question*, and she stop'd my Mouth again with saying she took the utmost care about it.

The only thing I found in all her Conversation on these Subjects, that gave me any distaste, was, that one time in Discoursing about my being so far gone with Child, she said something that look'd as if she could help me off with my Burthen sooner, if I was willing; or in *English*, that she could give me something to make me Miscarry, if I had a desire to put an end to my Troubles that way; but I soon let her see that I abhor'd the Thoughts of it; and to do her Justice, she put it off so cleverly, that I could not say she really intended it, or whether she only mentioned the Practice as a horrible thing; for she couch'd her Words so well, and took my Meaning so quickly, that she gave her Negative before I could explain my self.

To bring this part into as narrow a Compass as possible, I quited my Lodging at St. Jones's, and went to my new Governess, for so they call'd her in the House, and there I was indeed treated with so much Courtesy, so carefully look'd to, and every thing so well, that I was surpris'd at it, and could not at first see what Advantage my Governess made of it; but I found afterwards that she

profess'd to make no Profit of the Lodger's Dyet, nor indeed cou'd she get much by it, but that her Profit lay in the other Articles of her Management, and she made enough that way, I assure you; for 'tis scarce credible what Practice she had, as well Abroad as at Home, and yet all upon the private Account, or in plain *Englisch*, the Whoring Account.

While I was in her House, which was near four Months, she had no less than twelve Ladies of Pleasure brought to Bed within Doors, and I think she had two and thirty, or thereabouts under her Conduct without Doors, whereof one, as nice as she was with me, was lodg'd with my old Landlady at St. Jones's.

This was a strange Testimony of the growing Vice of the Age, and as bad as I had been my self, it shock'd my very Senses, I began to nauseate the place I was in, and above all, the Practice; and yet I must say that I never saw, or do I believe there was to be seen the least indecency in the House the whole time I was there.

Not a Man was ever seen to come up Stairs, except to Visit the Lying-In Ladies within their Month, nor then without the old Lady with them, who made it a piece of the Honour of her Management that no Man should touch a Woman, No, not his own Wife, within the Month; nor would she permit any Man to lye in the House upon any pretence whatever, No, not tho' it was with his own Wife, and her saying for it was, that she car'd not how many Children was born in her House, but she would have none got there if she could help it.

It might perhaps be carried farther than was needful, but it was an Error of the Right Hand if it was an Error, for by this she kept up the Reputation, such as it was, of her Business, and obtain'd this Character, that tho' she

did take Care of the Women when they were debauch'd, yet she was not Instrumental to their being debauch'd at all, and yet it was a wicked Trade she drove too.

While I was here, and before I was brought to Bed, I receiv'd a Letter from my Trustee at the Bank full of kind obliging things, and earnestly pressing me to return to *London*: It was near a Fortnight old when it came to me, because it had first been sent into *Lancashire*, and then return'd to me; he concludes with telling me that he had obtain'd a Decree against his Wife, and that he would be ready to make good his Engagement to me, if I would accept of him, adding a great many Protestations of Kindness and Affection, such as he would have been far from offering if he had known the Circumstances I had been in, and which as it was I had been very far from deserving.

I return'd an Answer to this Letter, and dated it at *Liverpool*, but sent it by a Messenger, alledging, that it came in cover to a Friend in Town; I gave him Joy of his Deliverance, but rais'd some Scruples at the Lawfulness of his Marrying again, and told him, I suppos'd he would consider very seriously upon that Point before he resolv'd on it, the Consequence being too great for a Man of his Judgment to venture rashly upon; so concluded wishing him very well in whatever he resolv'd, without letting him into any thing of my own Mind, or giving any Answer to his Proposal of my coming to *London* to him, but mention'd at a distance my Intention to return the latter end of the Year, this being dated in *April*.

I was brought to Bed about the middle of *May*, and had another brave Boy, and my self in as good Condition as usual on such Occasions: My Governess did her part as a Midwife with the greatest Art and Dexterity imagin-

able, and far beyond all that ever I had had any Experience of before.

Her Care of me in my Travail, and after in my Lying-In, was such, that if she had been my own Mother it could not have been better; let none be encouraged in their loose Practices from this Dexterous Lady's Management, for she is gone to her place, and I dare say has left nothing behind her that can or will come up to it.

I think I had been brought to Bed about twenty Days when I receiv'd another Letter from my Friend at the Bank, with the surprising News that he had obtain'd a final Sentence of Divorce against his Wife, and had serv'd her with it on such a Day, and that he had such an Answer to give to all my Scruples about his Marrying again, as I could not expect, and as he had no Desire of; for that his Wife, who had been under some Remorse before for her usage of him, as soon as she heard that he had gain'd his Point, had very unhappily destroy'd herself that same Evening.

He express'd himself very handsomly as to his being concern'd at her Disaster, but clear'd himself of having any hand in it, and that he had only done himself Justice in a Case in which he was notoriously Injur'd and Abus'd: However, he said that he was extremely afflicted at it, and had no view of any Satisfaction left in this World, but only in the hope that I would come and relieve him by my Company; and then he press'd me violently indeed to give him some hopes, that I would at least come up to Town and let him see me, when he would farther enter into Discourse about it.

I was exceedingly surpriz'd at the News, and began now seriously to reflect on my Circumstances, and the inexpressible Misfortune it was to have a Child upon my

Hands, and what to do in it I knew not; at last I open'd my Case at a distance to my Governess, I appear'd melancholy for several Days, and she lay at me continually to know what troubled me; I could not for my Life tell her that I had an offer of Marriage, after I had so often told her that I had a Husband, so that I really knew not what to say to her: I own'd I had something which very much troubl'd me, but at the same time told her I cou'd not speak of it to any one alive.

She continued importuning me several Days, but it was impossible, *I told her*, for me to commit the Secret to any Body: This, instead of being an Answer to her, encreas'd her Importunities; she urg'd her having been trusted with the greatest Secrets of this Nature, that it was her business to Conceal every thing, and that to Discover things of that Nature would be her Ruin; she ask'd me if ever I had found her Tatling of other People's Affairs, and how could I suspect her? *she told me*, to unfold myself to her, was telling it to no Body; that she was silent as Death, that it must be a very strange Case indeed, that she could not help me out of; but to conceal it, was to deprive myself of all possible Help, or means of Help, and to deprive her of the Opportunity of Serving me. *In short*, she had such a bewitching Eloquence, and so great a power of Perswasion, that there was no concealing any thing from her.

So I resolv'd to unbosom myself to her, I told her the History of my *Lancashire* Marriage, and how both of us had been Disappointed; how we came together, and how we parted; How he Discharg'd me, as far as lay in him, and gave me free Liberty to Marry again, protesting that if he knew it he would never Claim me, or Disturb, or Expose me; that I thought I was free, but was dread-

fully afraid to venture, for fear of the Consequences that might follow in case of a Discovery.

Then I told her what a good Offer I had; show'd her my Friends Letters, inviting me to *London*, and with what Affection they were written, but blotted out the Name, and also the Story about the Disaster of his Wife, only that she was dead.

She fell a Laughing at my scruples about marrying, and told me the other was no Marriage, but a Cheat on both Sides; and that as we were parted by mutual Consent, the nature of the Contract was destroy'd, and the Obligation was mutually discharg'd; She had Arguments for this at the tip of her Tongue; and *in short*, reason'd me out of my Reason; not but that it was too by the help of my own Inclination.

But then came the great and main Difficulty, and that was the Child; this she told me must be remov'd, and that so, as that it should never be possible for any one to discover it: I knew there was no Marrying without concealing that I had had a Child, for he would soon have discover'd by the Age of it, that it was born, nay, and gotten too, since my Party with him, and that would have destroy'd all the Affair.

But it touch'd my Heart so forcibly to think of Parting entirely with the Child, and for ought I knew, of having it murther'd, or starv'd by Neglect and Ill-usage, which was much the same, that I could not think of it, without Horror: I wish all those Women who consent to the disposing their Children out of the way, *as it is call'd*, for Decency sake, would consider that 'tis only a contriv'd Method for Murther; that is to say, killing their Children with safety.

It is manifest to all that understand any thing of Chil-

dren, that we are born into the World helpless, and uncapable either to supply our own Wants, or so much as make them known; and that without help, we must Perish; and this help requires not only an assisting Hand, whether of the Mother, or some body else; but there are two Things necessary in that assisting Hand, that is, Care and Skill; without both which, half the Children that are born would die; nay, tho' they were not to be deny'd Food; and one half more of those that remain'd would be Cripples or Fools, loose their Limbs, and perhaps their Sense: I Question not, but that these are partly the Reasons why Affection was plac'd by Nature in the Hearts of Mothers to their Children; without which they would never be able to give themselves up, as 'tis necessary they should, to the Care and waking Pains needful to the Support of Children.

Since this Care is needful to the Life of Children, to neglect them is to Murther them; again, to give them up to be Manag'd by those People, who have none of that needful Affection, plac'd by Nature in them, is to Neglect them in the highest Degree; nay, in some it goes farther, and is in order to their being Lost; so that 'tis an intentional Murther, whether the Child lives or dies.

All those things represented themselves to my View, and that in the blackest and most frightful Form; and as I was very free with my Governess, who I had now learn'd to call Mother; I represented to her all the dark Thoughts which I had about it, and told her what distress I was in: She seem'd graver by much at this Part than at the other; but as she was harden'd in these things beyond all possibility of being touch'd with the Religious part, and the Scruples about the Murther; so she was equally impenetrable in that Part, which related to Affection:

She ask'd me if she had not been Careful and Tender of me in my Lying-Inn, as if I had been her own Child? I told her I own'd she had. Well my Dear, *says she*, and when you are gone, what are you to me? and what would it be to me if you were to be Hang'd? Do you think there are not Women, who as it is their Trade, and they get their Bread by it, value themselves upon their being as careful of Children, as their own Mothers? Yes, yes, Child, *says she*, fear it not, How were we Nurs'd ourselves? Are you sure, you was Nurs'd up by your own Mother? and yet you look fat, and fair, Child, *says the old Beldam*, and with that she stroak'd me over the face; never be concern'd, Child, *says she*, going on in her drolling way: I have no Murtherers about me, I employ the best Nurses that can be had; and have as few Children miscarry under their Hands, as there would, if they were all Nurs'd by Mothers; we want neither Care nor Skill.

She touch'd me to the Quick, when she ask'd if I was sure that I was nurs'd by my own Mother; on the Contrary I was sure I was not; and I trembled and look'd Pale at the very Expression; sure, said I, to my self, this Creature cannot be a Witch, or have any Conversation with a Spirit that can inform her what I was, before I was able to know it my self; and I look'd at her as if I had been frighted; but reflecting that it could not be possible for her to know any Thing about me, that went off, and I began to be easy, but it was not presently.

She perceiv'd the Disorder I was in, but did not know the Meaning of it; so she run on in her wild Talk upon the Weakness, of my supposing that Children were murder'd because they were not all nurs'd by the Mother; and to perswade me that the Children she disposed of,

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were as well used as if the Mothers had the Nursing of
them themselves.

It may be true Mother, *says I*, for ought I know, but my Doubts are very strongly grounded; come then, *says she*, lets hear some of them: Why first, *says I*, you give a Piece of Money to these People to take the Child off the Parents Hands, and to take Care of it as long as it lives; now we know Mother, said I, that those are poor People, and their Gain consists in being quit of the Charge as soon as they can; how can I doubt but that, as it is best for them to have the Child die, they are not over Solicitous about its Life.

This is all Vapours and Fancy, *says she*, I tell you their Credit depends upon the Child's Life, and they are as careful as any Mother of you all.

O Mother, *says I*, if I was but sure my little Baby would be carefully look'd to, and have Justice done it, I should be happy; but it is impossible I can be satisfy'd in that Point, unless I saw it, and to see it would be Ruin and Destruction, as my Case now stands, so what to do I know not.

A fine Story! *says the Governess*, you would see the Child, and you would not see the Child; you would be conceal'd and discover'd both together; these are things impossible, my Dear, and so you must e'en do as other conscientious Mothers have done before you; and be contented with things as they must be, tho' not as you wish them to be.

I understood what she meant by conscientious Mothers, she would have said conscientious Whores; but she was not willing to disoblige me, for really in this Case I was not a Whore, because legally Marry'd, the Force of my former Marriage excepted.

However, let me be what I would, I was not come up to that pitch of Hardness, common to the Profession; I mean to be unnatural, and regardless of the Safety of my Child, and I preserv'd this honest Affection so long, that I was upon the Point of giving up my Friend at the *Bank*, who lay so hard at me to come to him, and Marry him, that there was hardly any Room to deny him.

At last my old Governess came to me, with her usual Assurance. Come my Dear, *says she*, I have found out a way, how you shall be at a Certainty, that your Child shall be used well, and yet the People that take Care of it, shall never know you.

O Mother, *say I*, If you can do so, you will engage me to you for ever: Well, *says she*, are you willing to be at some small Annual Expence, more than what we usually give to the People we contract with? Ay, *says I*, with all my Heart, provided I may be concealed; as to that, *says she*, you shall be secure, For the Nurse shall never dare to Enquire about you, and you shall once or twice a Year go with me and see your Child, and see how 'tis used, and be satisfy'd that it is in good Hands, no Body knowing who you are.

Why, *said I*, do you think that when I come to see my Child, I shall be able to conceal my being the Mother of it, do you think that possible?

Well, *says she*, if you discover it, the Nurse shall be never the Wiser: She shall be forbid to take any Notice; if she offers it, she shall lose the Money, which you are to be suppos'd to give her, and the Child be taken from her too.

I was very well pleas'd with this; so the next Week a Country Woman was brought from *Hertford*, or thereabouts, who was to take the Child off our Hands entirely,

for 10*l.* in Money; but if I would allow 5*l.* a Year more to her, she would be oblig'd to bring the Child to my Governesses House as often as we desir'd, or we should come down and look at it, and see how well she used it.

The Woman was a very wholesome-look'd likely Woman, a Cottager's Wife, but she had very good Cloaths and Linnen, and every thing well about her, and with a heavy Heart and many a Tear, I let her have my Child: I had been down at *Hertford* and look'd at her, and at her Dwelling, which I lik'd well enough; and I promised her great Things if she would be kind to the Child, so she knew at first Word that I was the Child's Mother; but she seem'd to be so much out of the Way; and to have no Room to enquire after me, that I thought I was safe enough, so in short, I consented to let her have the Child, and I gave her 10*l.*, that is to say I gave it to my Governess, who gave it the poor Woman before my Face, she agreeing never to return the Child back to me, or to claime any Thing more for its Keeping, or Bringing up; only that I promised, if she took a great deal of Care of it, I would give her some thing more as often as I came to see it; so that I was not bound to pay the 5*l.* only that I promis'd my Governess I would do it: And thus my great Care was over, after a manner, which tho' it did not at all satisfy my Mind, yet was the most convenient for me, as my Affairs then stood, of any that could be thought of at that Time.

I then began to write to my Friend at the *Bank*, in a more kindly Style, and particularly about the Beginning of *July* I sent him a Letter, that I purpos'd to be in Town sometime in *August*; he return'd me an Answer in the most passionate Terms imaginable, and desir'd me to let him have timely Notice, and he would come and meet

me two Days Journey: This puzzl'd me scurvily, and I did not know what Answer to make to it; once I was resolv'd to take the Stage Coach to *West Chester*, on Purpose only, to have the Satisfaction of coming back, that he might see me really come in the same Coach; for I had a jealous Thought, tho I had no Ground for it at all, least he should think I was not really in the Country.

I endeavour'd to Reason my self out of it, but it was in vain, the Impression lay so strong on my Mind, that it was not to be resisted; at last it came as an Addition to my new Design of going into the Country, that it would be an excellent Blind to my old Governess, and would cover entirely all my other Affairs, for she did not know in the least, whether my new Lover liv'd in *London*, or, in *Lancashire*, and when I told her my Resolution, she was fully perswaded it was in *Lancashire*.

Having taken my Measures for this Journey, I let her know it, and sent the Maid that tended me from the Beginning, to take a Place for me in the Coach; she would have had me let the Maid have waited on me down to the last Stage, and come up again in the Waggon, but I convinc'd her it would not be convenient; when I went away, she told me, she would enter into no Measures for Correspondence, for she saw evidently that my affection to my Child would cause me to write to her, and to Visit her too, when I came to Town again; I assur'd her it would, and so took my Leave, well satisfy'd, to have been freed from such a House, however good my Accommodations there had been.

I took the Place in the Coach not to its full Extent, but to a place called *Stone*, in *Cheshire*, where I not only had no manner of Business, but not the least Acquaintance with any Person in the Town: But I knew that with

Money in the Pocket one is at Home any where; so I lodg'd there two or three Days, 'till watching my Opportunity, I found Room in another Stage Coach, and took Passage back again for *London*, sending a Letter to my Gentleman, that I should be such a certain Day at *Stony-Stratford*, where the Coachman told me he was to Lodge.

It happen'd to be a Chance Coach that I had taken up, which having been hired on Purpose to carry some Gentlemen to *West-Chester*, who were going for *Ireland*, was now returning, and did not tye it self up to exact Times or Places, as the Stages did, so that having been oblig'd to lye still on *Sunday*, he had Time to get himself ready to come out, which otherwise he could not have done.

His Warning was so short, that he could not reach *Stony-Stratford* time enough to be with me at Night, but he met me at a Place called *Brickill* the next Morning, just as we were coming into the Town.

I confess I was very glad to see him, for I thought my self a little disappointed over Night: He pleas'd me doubly too by the Figure he came in, for he brought a very handsome (Gentleman's) Coach, and four Horses, with a Servant to attend him.

He took me out of the Stage Coach immediately, which stop'd at an Inn in *Brickill*, and putting into the same Inn, he set up his own Coach, and bespoke his Dinner; I ask'd him what he meant by that, for I was for going forward with the Journey; he said, no, I had need of a little Rest upon the Road, and that was a very good sort of a House, tho' it was but a little Town; so we would go no farther that Night, what ever came of it.

I did not press him much, for since he had come so far to meet me, and put himself to so much Expence, it was

but reasonable I should oblige him a little too, so I was easy as to that Point.

After Dinner we walk'd to see the Town, to see the Church, and to view the Fields, and the Country as is usual for Strangers to do, and our Landlord was our Guide in going to see the Church. I observ'd my Gentleman enquir'd pretty much about the Parson, and I took the hint immediately, that he certainly would propose to be married; and it follow'd presently, that in short, I would not refuse him; for to be plain with my Circumstances, I was in no condition now to say NO, I had no reason now to run any more such hazards.

But while these Thoughts run round in my Head, which was the work but of a few Moments, I observ'd my Landlord took him aside and whisper'd to him, tho' not very softly neither, for so much I over-heard, *Sir, if you shall have occasion*——the rest I could not hear, but it seems it was to this purpose, *Sir, if you shall have occasion for a Minister, I have a Friend a little way off that will serve you, and be as private as you please*; my Gentleman answer'd loud enough for me to hear, *very well, I believe I shall.*

I was no sooner come back to the Inn, but he fell upon me with irresistible Words, that since he had had the good Fortune to meet me, and everything concurr'd, it would be hastening his Felicity if I would put an end to the matter just there; what do you mean *says I*, colouring a little, what, in an Inn, and on the Road! Bless us all, *said I*, how can you talk so! O I can talk so very well, *says he*, I came on purpose to talk so, and I'll show you that I did, and with that he pulls out a great Bundle of Papers; you fright me, *said I*, what are all these? don't be frightened, my Dear, *said he*, and kiss'd me, *this was the first time that he*

bad been so free to call me my Dear; then he repeated it, don't be frighted, you shall see what it is all, then he laid them all abroad; there was first the Deed or Sentence of Divorce from his Wife, and the full Evidence of her playing the Whore; then there was the Certificates of the Minister and Church-wardens of the Parish where she liv'd, proving that she was buried, and intimating the manner of her Death; the Copy of the Coroner's Warrant for a Jury to sit upon her, and the verdict of the Jury, who brought it in *Non Compos Mentis;* all this was to give me Satisfaction, tho' by the way, I was not so scrupulous, had he known all, but that I might have taken him without it: However, I look'd them all over as well as I cou'd, and told him, that this was all very clear indeed, but that he need not have brought them out with him, for it wastime enough: Well, *he said*, it might be time enough for me, but no time but the present time was time enough for him.

There were other Papers roll'd up, and I ask'd him what they were? Why, Ay, *says he*, that's the Question I wanted to have you ask me; so he takes out a little Chagreen Case, and gives me out of it a very fine Diamond Ring; I could not refuse it, if I had a mind to do so, for he put it upon my Finger; so I only made him a Curtsy, then he takes out another Ring, and this, *says he*, is for another Occasion, and puts that into his Pocket: Well, but let me see it tho', *says I*, and smil'd, I guess what it is, I think you are Mad: I should have been Mad if I had done less, *says he*, and still he did not show it me, and I had a great mind to see it; so I says, well, but let me see it; hold, *says he*, first look here, then he took up the Roll again, and read it, and behold! it was a License for us to be married: Why, *says I*, are you Distracted? you were

fully satisfy'd sure that I would yield at first Word, or resolv'd to take no denial; the last is certainly the Case, *said he*; but you may be mistaken, *said I*; no, no, *says he*, I must not be denied, I can't be denied, and with that he fell to kissing me so violently, I could not get rid of him.

There was a Bed in the Room, and we were walking to and again, eager in the Discourse, at last, he takes me by surprize in his Arms, and threw me on the Bed and himself with me, and holding me still fast in his Arms, but without the least offer of any Undecency, Courted me to Consent with such repeated Entreaties and Arguments; protesting his Affection, and vowing he would not let me go, till I had promised him, that at last I said, why you resolve not to be deny'd indeed, I think: No, no, *says he*, I must not be deny'd, I won't be deny'd, I can't be deny'd: Well, well, *said I*, and giving him a slight Kiss, then you shan't be deny'd, let me get up.

He was so Transported with my Consent, and the kind manner of it, that I began to think Once, he took it for a Marriage, and would not stay for the Form; but I wrong'd him, for he took me by the Hand, pull'd me up again, and then giving me two or three Kisses, thank'd me for my kind yielding to him; and was so overcome with the Satisfaction of it, that I saw Tears stand in his Eyes.

I turned from him, for it fill'd my Eyes with Tears too; and ask'd him leave to retire a little to my Chamber: If I had a Grain of true Repentance for an abominable Life of 24 Years past, it was then. Oh! what a felicity is it to Mankind, *said I*, to myself, that they cannot see into the Hearts of one another! How happy had it been, if I had been Wife to a Man of so much Honesty, and so much Affection from the Beginning?

Then it occurr'd to me what an abominable Creature

am I! and how is this innocent Gentleman going to be abus'd by me! How little does he think, that having Divorc'd a Whore, he is throwing himself into the Arms of another! that he is going to Marry one that has lain with two Brothers, and has had three Children by her own Brother! one that was born in *Newgate*, whose Mother was a Whore, and is now a transported Thief; one that has lain with thirteen Men, and has had a Child since he saw me! poor Gentleman! *said I*, What he is going to do! After this reproaching myself was over, it followed thus: Well, if I must be his Wife, if it please God to give me Grace, I'll be a true Wife to him, and love him suitably to the strange Excess of his Passion for me; I will make him amends, by what he shall see, for the Abuses I put upon him, which he does not see.

He was impatient for my coming out of my Chamber, but finding me long, he went down Stairs, and talk'd with my Landlord about the Parson.

My Landlord, an Officious, tho' well-meaning Fellow, had sent away for the Clergy Man; and when my Gentleman began to speak to him, of sending for him, Sir, says he to him, my Friend is in the House; so without any more words he brought them together: When he came to the Minister, he ask'd him if he would venture to marry a couple of Strangers that were both willing? The Parson said that Mr. —— had said something to him of it; that he hop'd it was no Clandestine Business; that he seem'd to be a grave Gentleman, and he suppos'd Madam was not a Girl, so that the consent of Friends should be wanted; to put you out of doubt of that, says my Gentleman, read this Paper, and out he pulls the License; I am satisfy'd, says the Minister, where is the Lady? you shall see her presently, says my Gentleman.

When he had said thus, he comes up stairs, and I was by that time come out of my Room, so he tells me the Minister was below, and that upon showing him the License, he was free to marry us with all his Heart, but he asks to see you, so he ask'd if I would let him come up.

'Tis time enough, *said I*, in the Morning, is it not? Why, *said he*, my Dear, he seem'd to scruple whether it was not some young Girl stolen from her Parents, and I assur'd him we were both of Age to command our own Consent; and that made him ask to see you; well, *said I*, do as you please; so up they brings the Parson, and a merry good sort of Gentleman he was: he had been told, it seems, that we had met there by accident, that I came in a *Chester Coach*, and my Gentleman in his own Coach to meet me: that we were to have met last Night at *Stony-Stratford*, but that he could not reach so far: Well, Sir, *says the Parson*, every ill turn has some good in it; the Disappointment, Sir, *says he to my Gentleman*, was yours, and the good Turn is mine, for if you had met at *Stony-Stratford* I had not had the Honour to Marry you: *LANDLORD, have you a Common Prayer Book?*

I started as if I had been frighted, Sir, *says I*, what do you mean, what to marry in an Inn, and at Night too! Madam, *says the Minister*, if you will have it be in the Church you shall; but I assure you your Marriage will be as firm here as in the Church; we are not tyed by the Canons to Marry no where but in the Church; and as for the time of Day, it does not at all weigh in this Case, our Princes are married in their Chambers, and at Eight or Ten a Clock at Night.

I was a great while before I could be perswaded, and pretended not to be willing at all to be married but in the Church; but it was all Grimace; so I seem'd at last to be

prevail'd on, and my Landlord, and his Wife and Daughter, were call'd up: My Landlord was Father and Clark and all together, and we were married, and very Merry we were; tho' I confess the self-reproaches which I had upon me before, lay close to me, and extorted every now and then a deep sigh from me, which my Bridegroom took notice of, and endeavour'd to encourage me, thinking, poor Man, that I had some little hesitations at the Step I had taken so hastily.

We enjoy'd our selves that Evening compleatly, and yet all was kept so private in the Inn, that not a Servant in the House knew of it, for my Landlady and her Daughter waited on me, and would not let any of the Maids come up stairs. My Landlady's Daughter I call'd my Bride Maid; and sending for a Shopkeeper the next Morning, I gave the young Woman a good Suit of Knots, as good as the Town would afford, and finding it was a Lacemaking Town, I gave her Mother a Piece of Bone-lace for a Head.

One Reason that my Landlord was so close was, that he was unwilling the Minister of the Parish should hear of it; but for all that somebody heard of it, so as that we had the Bells set a Ringing the next Morning early, and the Musick, such as the Town would afford, under our Window; but my Landlord brazen'd it out, that we were marry'd before we came thither, only that being his former Guests, we would have our Wedding-Supper at his House.

We could not find in our Hearts to stir the next day; for, in short, having been disturb'd by the Bells in the Morning, and having perhaps not slept over much before, we were so sleepy afterwards that we lay in Bed till almost Twelve a Clock.

I beg'd my Landlady, that we might have no more Musick in the Town, nor ringing of Bells, and she manag'd it so well that we were very quiet: But an odd Passage interrupted all my Mirth for a good while; the great Room of the House look'd into the Street, and I had walk'd to the End of the Room, and it being a pleasant warm Day, I had open'd the Window, and was standing at it for some Air, when I saw three Gentlemen ride by, and go into an Inn just against us.

It was not to be conceal'd, nor did it leave me any Room to question it, but the second of the three, was my *Lancashire* Husband: I was frighted to Death, I never was in such a Consternation in my Life, I thought I should have sunk into the Ground, my Blood run chill in my Veins, and I trembl'd as if I had been in a cold fit of an Ague: I say, there was no room to question the Truth of it, I knew his Cloaths, I knew his Horse, and I knew his Face.

The first Reflection I made was, that my Husband was not by to see my Disorder, and that I was very glad of: The Gentlemen had not been long in the House but they came to the Window of their Room, as is usual; but my Window was shut you may be sure: However, I could not keep from peeping at them, and there I saw him again, heard him call to one of the Servants for something he wanted, and receiv'd all the terrifying Confirmations of its being the same Person, that were possible to be had.

My next concern was to know, what was his Business there; but that was impossible; sometimes my Imagination form'd an Idea of one frightful thing, sometimes of another; sometimes I thought he had discover'd me, and was come to upbraid me with Ingratitude and Breach of

Honour; then I fancied he was coming up Stairs to insult me; and innumerable Thoughts came into my Head, of what was never in his Head, nor ever could be, unless the Devil had reveal'd it to him.

I remain'd in the Fright near two Hours, and scarce ever kept my Eye from the Window or Door of the Inn, where they were: At last hearing a great clutter in the Passage of their Inn, I run to the Window, and, to my great Satisfaction, I saw them all three go out again and travel on Westward; had they gone towards *London*, I should have been still in a Fright, least I should meet him again, and that he should know me; but he went the contrary way, and so I was eas'd of that Disorder.

We resolv'd to be going the next Day, but about six a Clock at Night we were alarm'd with a great Uproar in the Street, and People riding as if they had been out of their Wits, and what was it but a Hue and Cry after three Highway Men, that had rob'd two Coaches, and some Travellers near *Dunstable* Hill, and notice had, it seems, been given, that they had been seen at *Brickill* at such a House, meaning the House where those Gentlemen had been.

The House was immediately beset and search'd, but there were witnesses enough that the Gentlemen had been gone above three Hours; the Crowd having gathered about, we had the News presently; and I was heartily concern'd now another way: I presently told the People of the House, that I durst say those were honest Persons, for that I knew one of the Gentlemen to be a very honest Person, and of a good Estate in *Lancashire*.

The Constable, who came with the Hue and Cry, was immediately inform'd of this, and came over to me to be satisfy'd from my own Mouth, and I assur'd him that I

saw the three Gentlemen as I was at the Window, that I saw them afterwards at the Windows of the Room they din'd in; that I saw them take Horse, and I would assure him I knew one of them to be such a Man, that he was a Gentleman of a very good Estate, and an undoubted Character in *Lancashire*, from whence I was just now upon my Journey.

The assurance with which I deliver'd this, gave the Mob Gentry a Check, and gave the Constable such Satisfaction, that he immediately sounded a Retreat, told his People these were not the Men, but that he had an account they were very honest Gentlemen, and so they went all back again; what the Truth of the matter was I knew not, but certain it was that the Coaches were rob'd at *Dunstable* Hill, and 560*l.* in Money taken, besides some of the Lace Merchants that always Travel that way had been visited too; as to the three Gentlemen, that remains to be explain'd hereafter.

Well, this Allarm stop'd us another Day, tho' my Spouse told me it was always safest Travelling after a Robbery, for that the Thieves were sure to be gone far enough off when they had allarm'd the Country; but I was uneasy, and indeed principally least my old Acquaintance should be upon the Road still, and should chance to see me.

I never liv'd four pleasanter Days together in my life, I was a meer Bride all this while, and my new Spouse strove to make me easie in every thing: O could this State of Life have continu'd! how had all my past Troubles been forgot, and my future Sorrows been avoided! but I had a past life of a most wretched kind to account for, some of it in this World as well as in another.

We came away the fifth Day; and my Landlord, be-

cause he saw me uneasie, mounted himself, his Son, and three honest Country Fellows, with good Fire-Arms, and, without telling us of it, follow'd the Coach, and would see us safe into *Dunstable*; we could do no less than treat them very handsomely at *Dunstable*, which Cost my Spouse about Ten or Twelve Shillings, and something he gave the Men for their Time too, but my Landlord would take nothing for himself.

This was the most happy Contrivance for me that could have fallen out, for had I come to *London* unmarried, I must either have come to him for the first Night's Entertainment, or have discovered to him that I had not one Acquaintance in the whole City of *London*, that could receive a poor Bride for the first Night's Lodging with her Spouse: But now I made no scruple of going directly home with him, and there I took Possession at once of a House well Furnished, and a Husband in very good Circumstances, so that I had a prospect of a very happy Life, if I knew how to manage it; and I had leisure to consider of the real Value of the Life I was likely to live; how different it was to be from the loose part I had acted before, and how much happier a Life of Virtue and Sobriety is, than that which we call a Life of Pleasure.

O had this particular Scene of Life lasted, or had I learnt from that time I enjoy'd it, to have tasted the true sweetness of it, and had I not fallen into that Poverty which is the sure Bane of Virtue, how happy had I been, not only here, but perhaps for ever? for while I liv'd thus, I was really a Penitent for all my Life pass'd, I look'd back on it with Abhorrence, and might truly be said to hate my self for it: I often reflected how my Lover at *Bath*, strook by the Hand of God, repented and abandon'd me, and refus'd to see me any more, tho' he lov'd

me to an extreme; but I, prompted by that worst of Devils, Poverty, return'd to the vile Practice, and made the Advantage of what they call a handsome Face, be the Relief to my Necessities, and Beauty be a Pimp to Vice.

Now I seem'd landed in a safe Harbour, after the Stormy Voyage of Life past was at an end; and I began to be thankful for my Deliverance: I sat many an Hour by my self, and wept over the Remembrance of past Follies, and the dreadful Extravagances of a wicked Life, and sometimes I flatter'd my self that I had sincerely repented.

But there are Temptations which it is not in the Power of Human Nature to resist, and few know what would be their Case, if driven to the same Exigences: As Covetousness is the Root of all Evil, so Poverty is the worst of all Snares: But I wave that Discourse till I come to the Experiment.

END OF VOLUME I

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